

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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I N S I D E

See NORITA on Page 8

See HOUSE on Page 8

Local Milestones

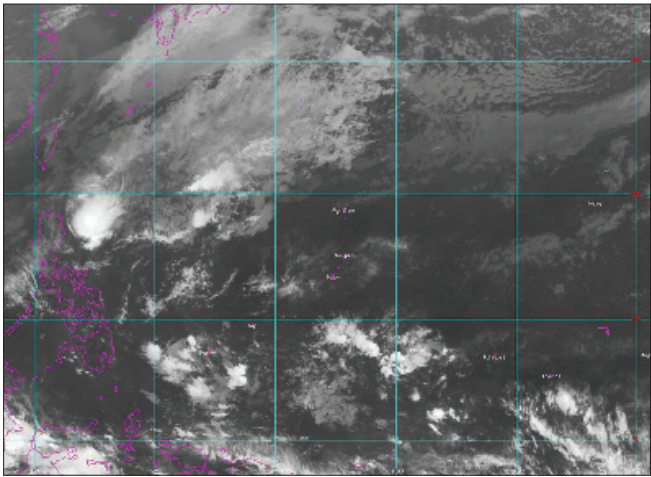
SAIPANCELL
CMYK

CARS UNLIMITED

CENTURY TRAVEL

COMMUNITY *Briefs*

WEATHER FORECAST



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.



SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.



GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.



PALAU
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.



POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.



YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.




CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)

ADA anniversary focus on accessibility

 The CNMI, together with the rest of the American family, will be celebrating today the 14th anniversary of the passage of the American with Disabilities Act.

Employer warned vs incomplete applications

The Department of Labor has warned an employer against delays in correcting deficiencies in nonresident work permit applications, saying that substantial sanctions may be imposed against the company if it commits future violations.

Labor hearing officer Jerry Cody also ordered Pacific Belle Inc., which operates Club Taboo, to pay a \$250 fine and an additional \$225 processing fee for an amendment to the contract of alien worker Lyn Adanza.

Records showed that Pacific Belle submitted deficient applications for Sim Chin Ju and Adanza early this year. The Labor Department issued a deficiency notice for each worker, instructing the company to correct the deficiencies within 10 days or be subject to the denial of the applications.

The department's processing section, however, did not get the documents that would have corrected the deficiencies for several months after the notice was issued, resulting in Labor denying the applications. Pacific Belle appealed.

Evidence presented at the hearing showed that the company had the documents that would have corrected the deficiencies, but failed to deliver them to the processing section.

Also at the hearing, Sim asked the department's permission to transfer to a new employer, while Adanza and the employer asked to be allowed to amend the term of the worker's contract from six months to one year.

Cody affirmed the denial of Sim's application and approved her request for a transfer relief, noting that she "is not at fault in the items which led the application to be denied."

The hearing officer ordered the Division of Labor to process the application for Adanza, provided that Pacific Belle pays the \$250 fine and the \$225 processing fee for the contract amendment.

"Pacific Belle Inc. and its president, Noel Reyes, are warned that in the future, the company should take prompt steps to correct deficiencies... Failure to do so may lead to the imposition of substantial sanctions against the company in the future," Cody said. *(Agnes Donato)*

On this day in 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the ADA, guaranteeing equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, commercial facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.

As part of the activities lined up for this week, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities will be kicking off an Accessibility Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities Training event today, from 8:45am to around 5pm.

For the first time in history of the CNMI, Paul Beatty, an accessibility specialist from the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board—better known as the US Access Board in Washington, D.C.—will be conducting the ADA Accessibility Guidelines & Uniform Accessibility Standards 101.

CDD executive director Thomas L. Camacho will be co-presenting and will cover the interplay between Parking Standards under ADAAG and Persons with Disabilities Parking Access Act of 1993.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, Beatty will present a more detailed ADAAG and answer technical questions from the audience.

The U.S. Access Board is charged with enforcing the Architectural Barriers Compliance Act of 1968 and developed the

BY THE NUMBERS

Population distribution	ity, the highest rate in the nation (West Virginia also has the highest median age of any state.), followed by Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama.	Specific Disabilities	18.2 million —Number of people age 16 or older who have a condition that makes it difficult to go outside the home to shop or visit a doctor. This group accounts for 8.6 percent of people who are of this age.
49.7 million —Number of people age 5 and over in the civilian non-institutionalized population with at least one disability, according to Census 2000; this is a ratio of nearly 1-in-5 U.S. residents, or 19 percent. These individuals fit at least one of the following descriptions: 1) they are 5 years old or older and have a sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability; 2) they are 16 years old or older and have difficulty going outside the home; or 3) they are 16-to-64 years old and have an employment disability.	30 percent —Percentage of residents of Paterson, N.J., who have at least one disability. Paterson, N.J.; Miami, Fla.; and Newark, N.J., have the highest proportions of people with disabilities among places with 100,000 or more residents.	9.3 million —The number of people age 5 or older in 2000 with a sensory disability involving sight or hearing. This group accounts for 3.6 percent of the total population age 5 or over.	21.3 million —Number of people ages 16 to 64 who have a condition that affects their ability to work at a job or business. They account for 11.9 percent of the people in this age group.
By age and sex	7 percent of boys and 4 percent of girls ages 5 to 15 have disabilities. 20 percent of men and 18 percent of women ages 16 to 64 have disabilities. 43 percent of women and 40 percent of men 65 or older have disabilities.	46 percent —Percentage of people with disabilities reporting more than one disability.	Earnings
		60 percent —Percentage of working-age men with disabilities who are employed. For women, the rate is 51 percent. Altogether, 10.4 million men and 8.2 million women with disabilities are employed.	\$28,803 —Median 1999 earnings of the 12 million year-round, full-time workers who have any of the six disabilities mentioned above. By comparison, people with none of these disabilities had median earnings of \$33,970.
		1.9 million —Number of people ages 18 to 34 who have disabilities and are enrolled in school. They comprise 12 percent of all students in this age group. The majority of this group (1.4 million) attend college or graduate school.	Serving our nation
		6.8 million —Number of people age 5 or older who have a physical, mental or emotional condition causing difficulty in learning, remembering or concentrating. This group accounts for 4.8 percent of the total population age 5 or older.	2.4 million —Number of veterans who receive compensation for service-related disabilities. Of these vets, 440,000 served in World War II; 165,000 in Korea; 799,000 in Vietnam; and 419,000 in the Persian Gulf.

Uniform Accessibility Standards for federally owned or leased buildings and facilities such as the American Memorial Park under the National Park Service, the U.S. Post Office, the Federal Aviation Administration under the Department of Transportation, and federally funded buildings and facilities built in the CNMI such as the Community Development Block grant projects.

At least 60 individuals have signed up for this one-of-a-kind training, Camacho said.

On Friday, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission director Tim Riera from Honolulu will be conducting a three-hour workshop on the ADA: Small Businesses & Persons with Disabilities at the World Resort-Saipan, from 9am to 11am.



VERIZON 611
CMYK

CAMPUS BELLETIN

KHS student orientation today

This is to inform the parents/legal guardians of Kagman High School students that the orientation for school year 2004-2005 will be held today, July 26, for the seniors (12th grade) and the juniors (11th grade); July 27, Tuesday, for the sophomores (10th grade) and the freshmen (9th grade). Both orientations would begin at 9am in the school cafeteria.

NMC math placement schedule

The Northern Marianas College has scheduled three sessions for students to take the math placement test for the Fall 2004 enrollment.

All placement tests will be held at the NMC campus. The schedules are:

Aug. 3 (Tuesday)

10am-12noon Room D-1

5pm-7pm Room D-1

Aug. 6, (Friday)

10am-7pm Room D-1

Aug. 10, (Tuesday)

10am-12noon Room D-1

Test-takers need to bring:

a picture ID (Should be of acceptable quality as it is needed to be entered into the system);

a pen/pencil;

driver’s license;

passport;

other school picture ID;

CNMI Immigration Card.

Test-takers can also bring a calculator but this is optional and may not be shared with other test-takers.

Reservations will not be accepted, as the tests are on a first come, first served basis. Limited seats available. No admittance to the testing room will be allowed after the starting time listed above. Math placement slips are good for one year from test date and a placement test can only be taken once a year.

KagES parent, student orientation

Kagman Elementary School will start classes on Aug. 2, 2004 for school year 2004-2005. Instructional time for 1st-5th graders begin at 7:30am and ends at 2:15pm The Kindergarten morning session begins at 7:30am and ends at 10:30am The Kindergarten afternoon session begins at 11:30am and ends at 2:15pm.

There will be a parent/student orientation on July 30, Friday, at 3pm in the school’s cafeteria. At the orientation, parents will know their child’s classroom location and will meet their child’s teacher. Important forms, handbooks, and school calendars will be distributed.

Chacha Oceanview student orientation

Chacha Oceanview Jr. High School is informing all parents and legal guardians that there will be an orientation for all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students for school year 2004-2005 on Friday, July 30, at 9am in their homeroom class. Please check your name and your homeroom number on the school bulletin board.

For more information, call Chacha Oceanview Jr. High School at 664-4100/4113.

HJHS student orientation

The Hopwood Junior High School will be holding its orientation for 7th graders on Thursday, July 29,1-4pm. Please drop by the school library near the office to find your homeroom, then proceed to your homeroom to meet your teachers and pick up your class schedule and forms.

The 8th grade open house will be held the following day, Friday, July 30th, from 1-4pm.

On both days, our National Junior Honor Society members and student government members will be on hand for campus tours.

If you cannot make it on either date or time, come by the school at your convenience and check the posted class schedules in the glass display case outside the main office.

MHS class, orientation schedule set

In preparation for the opening of this school year, students of the Marianas High School are required to visit the counseling office on the dates listed below to pick up class schedules. Textbooks from last term need to be returned before receiving schedule.

All students

July 28 and 29, 8am-3:30pm

Make-up day

July 30, 10am-3:30pm

Orientation for incoming freshmen and new students will be held on Friday, July 30, at 9am in the Marianas High School Gymnasium. All parents and legal guardians, with their students, are invited to attend.

Classes will begin on Monday, Aug. 2 for all students. Students are reminded that the 1st period bell rings at 8:25am.

Cook Islands corruption linked to subservience

RAROTONGA, Cook Islands

(Cook Islands News, PIR)—

Traditional respect for elders and leaders is a leading cause of corruption in the Cook Islands, says human rights group Transparency International (TI).

This respect stops people from asking questions about what is going on, says the civil society watchdog in one of a series of reports on government corruption across the Pacific.

“Old habits, family ties, culture and tradition,” set the scene for corruption say the country report authors Dr Takiora Ingram and Mathilda Uhrle.

“The political and social hierarchy ensures that people obey their superiors and political bosses. The principle operates in families, villages, churches

and the public service.

“One of the biggest problems is patronage, or giving jobs, contracts and other favors as payback for previous favors, or in the hope of future favors, rather than on the basis of merit,” reads the TI report.

Over 400 laws on the books at parliament give the appearance of “fairly robust” NIS, National Integrity Systems. However, laws are not always followed, reports Transparency International. Or enforced.

“There is little deterrent for public servants who engage in corrupt activities.

“There is no leadership code for public servants or members of parliament. Focus group participants noted that ethics are lacking at all levels of government and there is a serious dis-

regard for transparent processes and design making.”

According to the report, the corruption includes:

Political appointments of “poorly qualified” public servants without transparent processes.

“Conflicts of interest” in awarding contracts and licenses.

Nepotism.

“Excessive” travel by ministers and public servants.

Granting of immigration permits “without transparent processes.”

“Lack of respect” for the rule of law.

Transparency International quotes the 1998 Political Review Commission report when it says government continues to be “expensive, excessive and exploitative.”

With an election looming, “politicians are again increasing the size of the public service.”

Looking at causes of corruption, Transparency International says the problem is not so much culture alone as its abuse.

“Although Cook Islands people have a tradition of sharing resources among family and community, when a person takes something that is not rightfully theirs, the person is regarded as a ‘keikeia’ (thief).”

TI suggests cost-benefit analysis be run on government programmes as another way of seeing where changes need to be made.

Transparency International does not count financial costs of corruption, but describes them as “considerable.”

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EDITORIAL

The 9/11 panel's report

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States did not begin its work under propitious circumstances. It was underfunded. It was given limited time but an enormous challenge: to deliver an authoritative account of the attacks and their aftermath and to issue recommendations to render America safer. And its commissioners were chosen in an overtly partisan fashion. Some of its hearings, in which commissioners seemed to play their assigned party roles, further stoked concern. All of which makes the more impressive the unanimity and comprehensiveness of the 600-page report the commission issued Thursday. The 10 members—five Democrats and five Republicans—issued a single document with no dissents and no additional views. Their report offers Americans a detailed history of the catastrophe that took place on Sept. 11, 2001; a probing account of the governmental failures that preceded it; and a useful analysis of the changes that have taken place since, as well as the changes that have not taken place. Most important is the commission's unwavering insistence—coming at a time when America's commitment is starting to waver—on the fundamental importance of counter-terrorist Islamism terrorism in the coming generation.

The report was predictably trivialized by its reception in election-year Washington. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., for example, declared that it "make(s) clear ... that the Bush administration did not give al-Qaida the high priority it should have had, either before or after 9/11." House Majority Leader Tom DeLay usefully added, "For eight years in the 1990s, international terrorism was at war with us ... and we treated it like jaywalking."

In fact, the finding that both the Clinton and Bush administrations failed to fully appreciate the danger of al-Qaida before the attacks is one of the report's more obvious, and less interesting, historical findings.

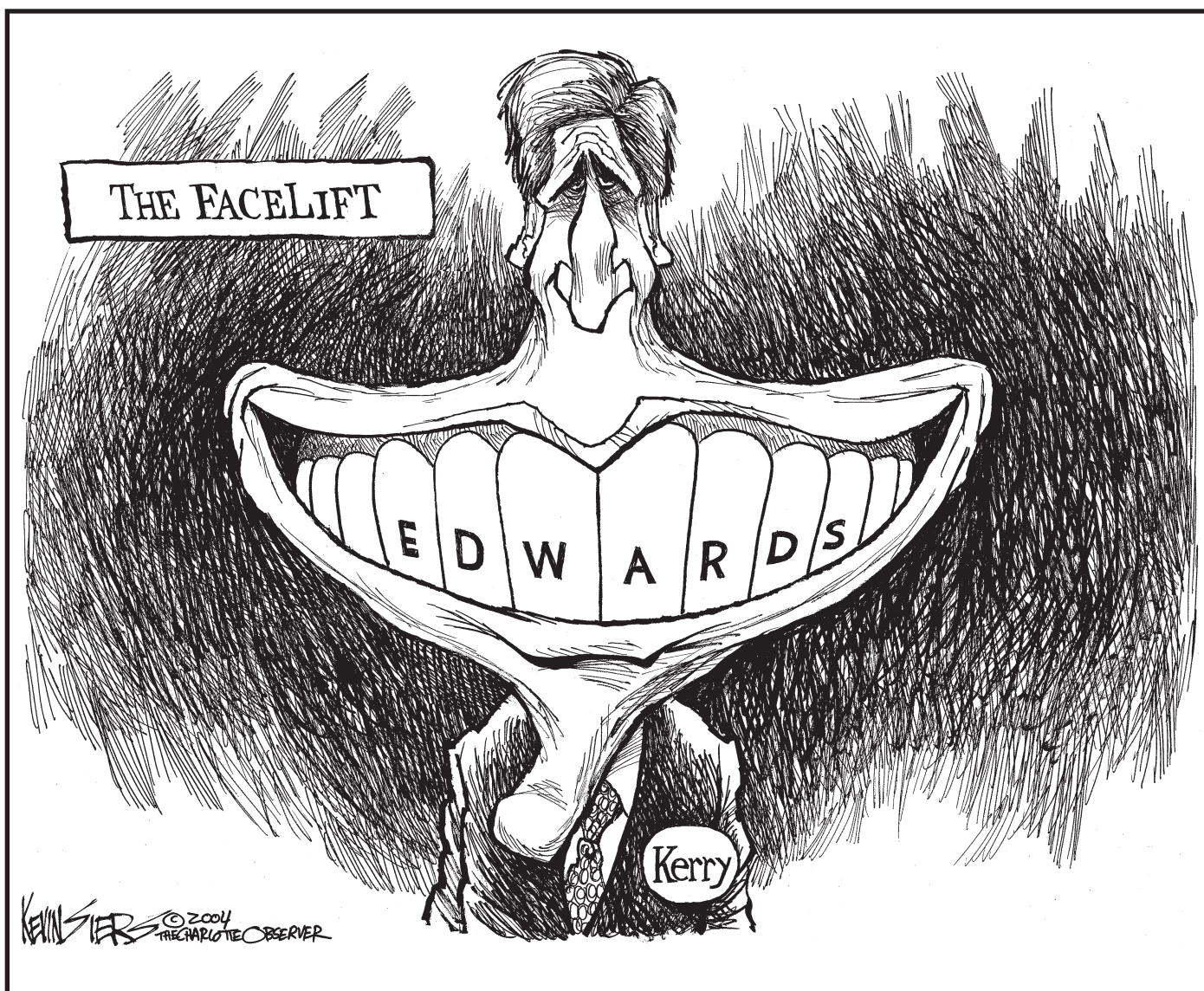
Covering areas from al-Qaida's background and modes of operation, to the history of the plot itself, to the group's relationship with countries including Iran and Iraq, to the shortcomings of various governmental authorities—notably including Congress—the report will enrich public debate and understanding of the attacks and the enemy America faces.

But the most important element of the commission's work is its willingness to think ambitiously about how this country still needs to change. The spasm of policymaking energy that followed the attacks is waning, and America faces a profound choice about whether to face the great challenge of confronting terrorism—and organizing government accordingly—or to drift back into complacency. The commission rightly urges not only fighting a war against terrorism but aggressively combating the conditions and ideas that give rise to violent anti-American Islamism; it urges, that is, that the United States promote democratic values and liberal education in nations where Islamist radicalism now seems the only alternative to authoritarianism.

The commission's recommendations for reform are far-reaching. It proposes creating a national counterterrorism center to manage intelligence and operations among different agencies and splitting the functions of the director of central intelligence between a director of the CIA and an overall intelligence czar in the White House. It will take months of debate to evaluate these ideas fully. But whether they are ultimately adopted or not, the report has clearly diagnosed some of the key problems that intelligence reform will have to address: specifically, how to ensure that someone is managing investigations across agencies, national borders and profoundly different legal systems. The quality of the commission's investigation and the strength of its evaluation of the bureaucratic problems should serve as a catalyst for a tremendously important discussion: Is America prepared to commit itself to this war for the long term, and how must society be organized to do so?

(c) 2004, The Washington Post

Opinion



9/11 panel plays it safe, makes no enemies

The final report of the 9/11 Commission offers something for everyone, which means that it's mostly a nothing. And so the real issue in winning the war on terror remains unaddressed.

The commission has been on the defensive since March, when it showcased the testimony of former counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke, who heaped blame for 9/11 squarely on the Bush administration. Republicans, in turn, accused the commission of playing anti-Bush politics in a presidential election year.

This GOP counterattack must have been particularly stinging to the panel's five Republican commissioners. And, in any case, it seems to have worked. In yesterday's Rose Garden ceremony, commission Chairman Tom Kean, a Republican, was at pains to praise George W. Bush. Though the White House had opposed the creation of the commission, had stymied many of its requests for information and had resisted giving the commission the time it felt it needed to do its way properly, Kean sounded more like an intern than ex-governor of New Jersey when he said to the president: "Thank you very much for giving me the honor of serving."

The commission's report doesn't name names; it mostly shuffles boxes—and then puts them back in the same place.

Consider, as one example, the commission's suggestion of creating a "national intelligence director" to oversee the 15 federal intelligence agencies. That's a nice-sounding idea. But we already have such a centralizer, whose title is director of central intelligence (DCI). That's right: the post commonly called "CIA director" is, in fact, the same director of central intelligence. That's been his title ever since the National Security Act of 1947 created the Central Intelligence Agency and tasked the DCI with coordinating intelligence government-wide.

As a second example, the commission proposes establishing a counterterrorism center inside the White House to become the "authoritative knowledge bank" for homeland-security efforts. That, too, sounds like a pretty good idea, although again it was first thought of 57 years ago; the National Security Council (NSC) is another product of the '47 National Security Act.

So one might ask: If the war on terror is the No. 1 national-security threat to the United States, shouldn't the National Security Council be tasked with that mission? If the current NSC isn't up to the job, we need a new NSC staff, not a second NSC-ish outfit operating in parallel.

Why would the commission seek to reinvent the wheel? It's safe to do so. Nobody on the commission is going to lose out on a social invitation—or a future government job—because of this report.

The original organizational ideas for national security, reaching

By **JAMES P. PINKERTON**
Special to Newsday

Pinkerton is a Newsday columnist.



back to the Truman administration, were good ones. Yes, there should be one "czar" overseeing all intelligence, and it's helpful to have an information clearinghouse function close by the commander-in-chief. So maybe the recommendations, redundant as they might be, are the commission's way of nudging the government to stick to what's worked fairly well for most of the last six decades.

Yet another recommendation is going to face a tougher fate: The commission wants to consolidate congressional oversight of counter-terror functions. This is a good idea—which is why it will probably never happen. Such consolidation would uproot turf of perhaps two dozen committees on Capitol Hill.

At this red-hot moment, no member of Congress is likely to come out publicly and say that personal perk- and pork-protection is more important than protecting the country. But House Speaker Dennis Hastert has already said that legislative action is unlikely this year; in 2005, after memories of the commission have faded, one can only wonder what Congress might be working on instead.

Besides, Washington today is atwitter with speculation about "pants-gate"—the apparent classified-document-pilfering committed by Bill Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger.

Berger's misdeeds underscore the basic flaw in the commission's report: people matter. The catastrophe of 9/11 wasn't a failure of organizational charts; it was a failure of personnel. One can argue about the apportionment of blame, and to whom, but it's simply a dodge to say that institutions, as opposed to individuals, were at fault.

In making its critique, the commission has asked for bureau-structural response. And such a response, however duplicative or delayed, will be forthcoming. But the notion of personal responsibility, as well as political accountability, will suffer another blow as new flow charts crowd out the obvious need for new and shrewder people—for folks who can anticipate terror trouble, not because they are in the right box but because they are in the right frame of mind.

So that's the lost opportunity of the 9/11 report. But, hey, at least the commissioners, not having made any enemies, will still be able to eat lunch in this town.

The social movement

In the lazy days of July, I ventured into thoughts of a viable social ethic and an effective social transformation movement. Taking myself off the mainstream of laidback summery sunshine thoughts, I reflected on four premises. If you are reading this, it might mean one of three things. You just wandered in. Or you read the previous three write-ups and are curious on how the train of thought ends. Or you are genuinely interested in the whole issue of ethics, be damned if you'd let a third rate writer get away with such frivolity as calling the various strands of progressive social efforts a "plethora of pitiful pools of private piddling," and vow to share a piece of your mind. Welcome neighbor!

Here's a recap: First premise was the need for an inclusive vision, no less than the well-being of the planet Earth itself as the primary context for the next social ethics. Identifying core blocks that focus on the reality of social contradictions and dealing with them was second premise. Being strategic in a time of emergent democratic space and a resurgent aristocratic sentiment is the third premise.

The first priority of any practical action is to build a large constituency. A critical mass of informed and dedicated people is needed to effect the necessary paradigm shifting, behavioral modification, structural and systemic changes that various social analysis have identified from a wide spectrum of ideological orientation. Attaining a critical mass is what enables change to happen. Movement building for the new ethics constituency is the fourth premise toward a viable and effective social transformation.

This constituency will have to address at least the following prevailing social contradictions: 1) inordinate power in the hands of an oligarchic few, 2) well-organized fanatical pre-modern reactionaries, 3) special-interest-manipulated information media, and 4) the inertia of the popular mindset. Now, how does one inspire and conspire, nurture and radicalize the millions of people it takes to transform postmodern global society in a lasting way?

Let me borrow some worn-out clichés. "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness." We have to learn how to powerfully light up a true story, tell the truth about the current world, and tell it frequently to many. Painting in dramatic detail a vision of the future, identifying with lucid examples core blocks, and promoting one's clarity on workable strategies inspire people to see that significant long-range changes are possible. Ordinary voices need to be heard. Books need to be written, articles published, courses and workshops

held, multimedia clips and blips created, speeches made; in short, conduct random acts of dissent and raise hell in every public forum to which one belongs.

This hell-raising, inspiration-generating, education-achieving activity presupposes personally embodying the truth. Here's another cliché: "We make the path by walking it." The tragic nature of our current social trajectories must be seen first within oneself and pointed to forcefully to give authenticity to the simultaneous act of telling the truth. The truth about what and who is promoting these trends, the truth about the kinds of organizations and actions that have a real promise of successfully combating these trends, and the truth about the positive potentials of humankind be boldly told.

In the deeply cynical nature of our age, this last truth is at the level of a spirit crisis. In the last half century, every externally imposed standard has come tumbling down. Thankfully, social scientists are rediscovering humankind's shared moral sensibilities and the basic human realities and experiences that shape them so that even people of widely divergent perspectives, as Saipan and other sector of the global society has become, they can address common problems anew.

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Amazingly, the first step could very well just be an old-fashioned belief of the eventual triumph of truth over lies. If we believe that truth will win in the end, then our challenge is to learn what the truth is and dedicate ourselves to living it.

But any truth that indicates the need for far-reaching changes in the entire frame of society is not as popular as familiar practices. Societies are inherently conservative. A participant in the local Diabetes Coalition confessed: "I know I need to walk more often but my relative youth and state of comfort zone do not make it urgent." Or, "My SUV is a guzzler but all my friends own one." Even when their very survival is at stake, the leaders and citizens of many societies have chosen to remain passive rather than be instruments of change. So how can a massive constituency for change arise?

If the lessons of history are heeded, one need to create networks, establish coalitions. But of who? The hungry are never conservative; they prefer to eat. Bountiful nature gone, once the generous nutrient source, makes activists of many. The marginalized, neglected and oppressed are never conservative, they prefer some attention and dignity. And as the minimum wage toilers realize that

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Vergara is a Social Studies 6th grade teacher at San Vicente Elementary School and writes a regular column for the Saipan Tribune.



trickle down economics is a lie, they will become a constituency for change. Local communities whose fresh water, verdant trees, clean air, and vibrant health are vanishing can consider changes that conserve such elemental values. Deprived of basic and essential services, awakened communities will cry out. Women long oppressed by deeply encrusted patriarchal patterns of social control, presently even resulting in heightened incidence of domestic violence, can see that the excessive stress on nature and the exploitation of the laboring poor also includes the oppression of most women. Women will not settle for just cosmetic measures.

Need I go on? Racial minorities barely delivered from structural racism of yesteryears can see that the oligarchies that are insensitive to the rights of women, the dignity of the poor, and the unsustainable utilization of nature are also the supporters of continuing racism, particularly in the workplace. As the ecological crisis intensifies, the middle class is squeezed. Only a few "advance" to retain their status as "kings and queens," the promise of the European bourgeoisie upheaval. In the United States, only a percent of the population own half of the wealth, I am told. Most in the middle class, even with two heads already earning, are hovering over the poverty line. With the middle classes vanishing, no buffer between rich and poor remain, so the rich barricade themselves into protective bubbles that are ever more vulnerable to puncture. As truths like this sink in, the conservation of our present trajectories become less popular in all sectors of society.

Join a social coalition. Create a social network. The key factor in engaging all these components of the population is the public actions of those who simply love the truth. If persistent, the lovers of truth can in time build that huge constituency we need. This is a realistic hope.

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

Decisions for higher education without politics

It is now time to revisit the issue of the La Fiesta Mall, Pacific Gateway project, and the Northern Marianas College. Right now it is appropriate to take a hard look at what has transpired since the above project was promoted in 2002. A recap of the events that took place over the past two fiscal years will make sense of how it evolved to where it is right now. Moreover, I believe it is important for the island community to have the information about the mall and Pacific Gateway in the forefront prior to the NMC Board of Regents meeting on July 28, 2004 to conduct a formal session on how to deal with the college's current fiscal dilemma as well as issues involving accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Looking in retrospect, it was quite evident that Gov. Juan N. Babauta was an ardent supporter of higher education for the CNMI before and subsequent to winning the gubernatorial race in Nov. 2001. Approximately six months after his inauguration in Jan. 2002, Kenneth Wright was hired as NMC president. Shortly thereafter, an announcement regarding the Pacific Gateway project was made by Wright and publicly supported by Babauta. Immediately following the purchase of the La Fiesta facility, there was talk that Babauta's family would gain monetarily from the transaction. The governor denied that neither he nor his family members were recipients of any funds stemming from the transaction.

During Wright's 18-month tenure as NMC president, the Asian Development Bank, Commonwealth Development Authority, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development organizations were approached to borrow and finance a projected \$34 million for the ambitious venture. None of these organizations stepped forward and offered a loan package to make the project come to fruition. At the time, the issue of NMC going into debt without the approval of the CNMI Legislature was brought up by several members of the House and Senate. It is still an issue and, whether or not it will be addressed by the elected officials of the 14th Legislature, remains to be seen.

Subsequent to one year after the NMC Board of Regents hired

Wright, the CNMI was approved for and issued \$10 million in funding for two years from the Jobs Tax and Relief Act appropriated by the Bush administration in 2003. Approximately \$3.5 million of that funding was issued to NMC Board of Regents via Babauta's office to purchase the La Fiesta Mall for \$7.5 million with a \$4-million balance to be repaid back over a 20-year period at \$200,000 per annum plus interest.

The transaction was made official by the approval of the regents and signed by then board chair Vince Seman. Shortly after, the governor's office issued another \$250,000 for the project for architectural improvements.

A year following the official purchase of the La Fiesta Mall in July 2003, the 14th Legislature authorized in June 2004 approximately \$666,634 (\$438,251 for personnel and \$228,383 for operations) to cover the said obligations by the college through the end of FY 2003-2004 which will be on Sept. 30, 2004.

Thus far, the CNMI governor's office has doled out approximately \$4.42 million for the La Fiesta Mall and Pacific Gateway project (\$3.5 million from the federal government and \$916,634 from the CNMI fiscal coffers). Had the \$4.42 million been expended on eradicating the institution's deficit, making repairs on the As Terlaje campus, and creating a small reserve, in lieu of purchasing the La Fiesta Mall, the college regents would more than likely not be faced with being on tenuous financial ground and worried sick about the issue of maintaining and retaining accreditation with WASC.

Prior to Wright's arrival to NMC, the college had a deficit. When Wright submitted his resignation in Feb. 2004, the college had a higher deficit and was in the red to the tune of \$1.5 million and had no monetary resources available to take care of the \$50,000 a month operational costs of the mall (\$600,000 a year). Consequently, the board decided to shutdown the mall facility due to the inability to handle the fiscal obligation on a monthly basis and placed a moratorium on the hiring of any new employees for the college.

According to the present interim president for NMC, the budgetary shortfall at the end of FY 2003-2004 is projected to be in the

vicinity of \$250,000. If this shortfall is added to the \$1.5 million that was a result of prior fiscal years, then the total deficit level for NMC going into FY 2004-2005 will be \$1.75 million. If this deficit is not eradicated, then the accreditation status with WASC will not improve and maintaining acceptable accreditation will hang in the balance. If it should remain in the balance for up to two years, then there is a strong possibility that the institution will be asked to "show cause" in terms of why it believes that WASC should allow it to remain accredited. The College of Marshall Islands is currently faced with a "show cause" and will lose their accreditation by January 2005 if WASC does not accept their rationale. Because WASC must adhere to federal regulations of not allowing an institution to be tenuous in terms of accreditation for more than two years, they are compelled to discontinue the accreditation of an institution if warranted.

At the onset of NMC's new fiscal year which commences on Oct. 1, 2004, the \$200,000 annual payment plus interest from the La Fiesta transaction will be due on the \$4 million balance of the \$7.5 million transaction conducted in 2003. Since the funding that the 14th Legislature approved is only up through the end of Sept. 2004, the sixty-four dollar question will be: "Where will the money come from to meet and satisfy the annual payment with interest? Since there are no extra monetary resources in the general fund or in the reserves, and the fiscal instability of the college will eliminate any possibility of borrowing from a financial institution to pull themselves out of this problematic disposition, there are very few options available for the board to use to answer the above question.

Galvin Guerrero, a board member and chair of the finance committee, told the media in June 2004: "There is no money to run the college; only \$90,000 is available and there is a \$200K liability." The \$666,634 authorized in June 2004 by the 14th Legislature was clearly a temporary remedy for the serious fiscal problem expressed by Guerrero.

The total cost obligation for NMC for the La Fiesta Mall on an

See DECISIONS on Page 12

DECISIONS

From Page 11

annual basis is \$825,000, i.e., \$600,000 (\$50,000 a month for operations, and the annual payment of \$200,000 plus interest every year for the next twenty years). If we add this \$825,000 to the \$1.75 million budgetary deficit for NMC, then the deficit mode for the college would be \$2.75 million. Being in the red at this level would not be acceptable to WASC and would also be problematic for the college over the short and long run.

The La Fiesta Mall in San Rogue is a “Taj Majal” that is presently not benefiting the college, students, faculty, or staff of NMC. As a matter of fact, it is a financial drain on the college and island community because it is a structure that

is presently without a function. Retaining it without doing anything with it would be like never wearing one of the five hundred pairs of shoes that Imelda Marcos purchased and placed in storage during the time her husband was President of the Philippines during the 1970’s and early 1980’s.

The survey conducted by Professor Sam McPhertes’ class in May 2004 revealed that 40 of 76 students said to “forget about La Fiesta” and 88 percent believed that the As Terlaje campus should be improved and renovated.” These results speak volumes about how the mall purchase and Pacific Gateway project has impacted local students.

A survey of the entire island community incorporating all islands should be taken to ascertain what the actual sentiments of the residents are regarding La

Fiesta and Pacific Gateway projects. The comments made by the island community should not be taken for granted by the Board of Regents.

The members who comprise the NMC Board of Regents were all appointed by the governor. Since the regents are appointed, then there is always the possibility of their loyalty and politics getting in the way of prudent decisions. Not all decisions made with the inclusion of politics by appointed college board members will be in the best interest of the internal and external stakeholders of the institution. And since the decisions that the board will be making soon will be critical in terms of whether the college moves forward or falters with the WASC, then the board members must be clear with what the consequences will be of the

decisions they make for the college.

Dr. Jack Angelo, a former NMC academic administrator, stated publicly that if the La Fiesta Mall was sold it would allow the regents to move toward bringing the college back to solvency. Dr. Angelo’s recommendation would not only help eradicate the current budgetary deficit of \$1.75 million the college is besieged with, but it would also eliminate the necessity of trying to rationalize to WASC how NMC will financially support two campuses with no funds available in the coffers and the abovementioned deficit.

Two wrongs do not make a right. The first wrong was to allow the indiscriminate spending by the former NMC president, which placed the college more in the hole fiscally and jeopardized

losing accreditation with WASC. The second wrong, which hasn’t been made yet, will be to try and keep La Fiesta Mall facility running without having the financial wherewithal to maintain it monthly and/or annually. Should the appointed NMC Board of Regents decide to allow politics into their decision regarding the La Fiesta facility and go with making a second wrong, then the consequences that follow inevitably will severely hinder the preservation and continuation of higher education in the CNMI. The stable future of the college will hinge on the prudent decisions by the NMC Board of Regents that will need to be void of politics or the influence of it.

Dr. Jesus D. Camacho
Delano, California

Nation

Bush: Administration will heed 9/11 panel

By PETE YOST
AP WRITER

CRAWFORD, Texas (AP)—Without promising what specific steps he will take, President Bush is committing his administration to relying on the recommendations of the Sept. 11 commission in waging the war on terrorism.

“The danger to America has not passed,” Bush said Saturday in his weekly radio address, citing the cautionary note sounded

this week by the commission chairman, Thomas Kean.

The commission’s unanimous report, the culmination of a 20-month investigation, portrayed the Sept. 11 terrorists as creative and determined while the nation they were preparing to strike was unprepared and uncomprehending of the imminent danger.

Legislation that would carry out two of the report’s recommendations will be the focus of an unusual round of hearings in August while Congress is in recess.

“The 9/11 commission’s recommendations will help guide our efforts,” said the president. “We will carefully examine all the commission’s ideas on how we can improve our ongoing efforts to protect America and to prevent another attack.”

Kean, a Republican, has left no doubt what he thinks should be done, saying that unless the panel’s recommendations are implemented swiftly, “we’re more vulnerable to another terrorist attack.”

“We’re in danger of just letting things slide. Time is not on our side,” Kean said.

Bush has not said how quickly the administration will act. Two important administration officials, Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge and acting CIA director John McLaughlin, oppose a Cabinet-level overseer of the intelligence apparatus, saying improving the current

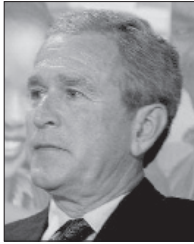
structure is what is needed. White House chief of staff Andrew Card will undertake a Cabinet-level review of the proposals, which will be examined at all levels of government. Bush insists all recommendations are on the table, while detailing the steps already taken.

He pointed to the dismantling of terrorist cells from California

to Florida the removal of regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We have waged a steady, relentless, determined war,” said the president.

Bush said his administration has provided \$13 billion to equip and train more than half a million first responders in cities across the country; transformed the FBI into an agency whose primary mission is fighting terrorism; and stockpiled enough small pox vaccine for every American in case of an emergency.



Bush

Report:
California
paid \$231M
for loans

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—California paid \$231 million to Wall Street investment firms that arranged billions of dollars in loans to keep the government afloat, and the state sometimes paid more in fees and commissions than other states were charged for similar transactions.

Over the last year, California paid 42 percent higher fees than Illinois did for a similar massive loan, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday.

The state also paid fees about 25 percent higher than Washington did in the mid-1980s when that state was being penalized for a costly municipal bond default, the newspaper said.

The borrowing is likely to continue—another \$1 billion loan is included in the budget being debated by California lawmakers and Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“I don’t think our elected leaders have made an honest accounting of the total cost of all of the borrowing,” Jean Ross, executive director of the non-profit California Budget Project in Sacramento, told the Times.

The fees and commissions are a largely hidden cost to taxpayers for the \$27.4 billion California has borrowed to keep state government running as it tries to recover from a record budget deficit. Taxpayers also will pay as much as \$8.9 billion in interest.

State Controller Steve Westly and Treasurer Phil Angelides said California’s credit rating, the nation’s worst, prompted the high borrowing costs.

“Being as dependent as California has been on lenders to finance its deficit is not fundamentally a healthy relationship,” Angelides said. “You never want to be at the knees of lenders.”

Cody Press, managing director of the public finance department of Citigroup, one of the firms involved, said the investment fees were justified because of the risk involved in propping up California’s government.



AP

The remains of a bridge smolder after being destroyed by a wildfire Wednesday, July 21, 2004, in Acton, Calif.

Calif. fires could prompt forest closures

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Even as firefighters contained major wildfires in Southern California, authorities contemplated drastic steps to prevent more in what could be another disastrous fire season.

Angeles National Forest supervisor Jody Noiron said Friday that the onslaught of blazes was unprecedented this early in the fire season.

In the past week, wildfires destroyed more than 48,000 acres of dry brush and trees. A handful of homes and other structures were lost and thousands of

residents were evacuated.

If the hot, dry weather conditions continue, forest officials “may be faced with some very tough decisions” to restrict use of national forests or close them, Noiron said.

Stanton Florea, a spokesman for the national forest, said the closures are only one of many measures being eyed by fire officials.

“It’s being discussed. There are many other levels of fire restrictions that we’d go to prior to that,” he said.

Those measures could in-

clude restricting campfires and stoves and closing at-risk areas, he said.

With Southern California in the fifth year of a drought and temperatures in the fire areas consistently reaching the high 90s, firefighters said it seemed more like October—the height of fire season—than mid-July.

California saw its worst fire season ever last year, when a series of gigantic blazes burned across more than 750,000 acres, destroying 3,650 homes and killing 24 people.

PSS

MT CARMEL

New mob informants lead to indictments

By LARRY McSHANE
AP WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—For 23 years, it was an unsolvable crime: a mob hit on three Bonanno family captains, slaughtered by machine gun fire in a social club. The details finally spilled forth this summer as the family's ex-underboss, now a government informant who remembered everything but the definition of "omerta," implicated Bonanno chief Joseph "Big Joey" Massino.

Thanks to a seemingly endless parade of Mafia turncoats, prosecutors are indicting and convicting mobsters on crimes dating back decades. The latest example was the indictment this past week of John A. "Junior" Gotti for an alleged 1992 botched attempt to kill talk radio host Curtis Sliwa over slurs directed at the mobster's father, the one-time head of the Gambino crime family.

The link to Gotti reportedly came from a former Gambino family capo, Michael "Mikey Scars" DiLeonardo.

"It's the critical difference," former federal prosecutor Jim Walden said of informants. "Without the testimony from these insiders, many of these cases against the Mafia would never have happened."

Walden knows firsthand. In 2001, using 10 cooperating witnesses, he won a conviction against Bonanno family "consigliere" Anthony Spero for murder, gambling and loansharking. One of the murders had occurred a decade earlier, when Spero ordered the execution of a neighborhood junkie who broke into his daughter's home.

In the Massino case, where closing arguments were heard this past week, the alleged crimes date back even further. One of the eight turncoat witnesses against him was his own underboss

and brother-in-law, Salvatore "Good Lookin' Sal" Vitale. The two had a friendship that began when they were teens, and Vitale, who has confessed to 11 murders, said Massino taught him everything he needed to know about organized crime.

"Thirty years ago, a case this like was not possible," said Ronald Goldstock, former head of the New York state Organized Crime Task Force. "The first cases with informants were in the early '80s."

By the '90s, the trend of ignoring omerta—the mob's oath of secrecy—was in full swing.

Sammy "the Bull" Gravano is perhaps the most infamous of the mob turncoats. By the time he turned government witness in 1991, Gravano had spent 23 years with the mob. His far-ranging testimony helped convict more than three dozen Mafiosi.

For prosecutors, the advantages of these longtime mobster witnesses are twofold.

First, by turning back the clock, they give prosecutors more leeway to find the crimes necessary for a racketeering indictment.

"It's much easier," said Court TV host Edward Hayes, a former Bronx prosecutor. "The wise guys might as well go get jobs driving taxis."

Secondly, the informants can testify about the years that predate a defendant's ascension in the family—a time when he likely lacked the insulation from activity on the streets that comes with the title of boss. That was the fate of the 61-year-old Massino.

"There's a parade of witnesses who have not only direct conversations with

Massino, but who were present during murders," Walden said.

Even really old informants seem to have new life these days.



Gotti

The Massino trial brought out rumors that Joe Pistone, the FBI agent who infiltrated the Bonannos by posing as mobster Donnie Brasco from 1976-81, might testify - although he never did.

And even informant Henry Hill, who joined the witness protection program

in 1979 after a life that was immortalized in the film "GoodFellas," has resurfaced. Although he's been out of the mob for a quarter-century, the former Luchese associate met last year with a pair of homicide detectives investigating cold cases.

"I can't believe I'm still useful to them," Hill said after his session.

Utah woman still missing after searches

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A woman who disappeared when she reportedly went out for a jog remained missing Saturday, after days of police efforts that have included cadaver dogs and a search of a municipal landfill.

Salt Lake City police Detective Dwayne Baird met for more than an hour Saturday with the family of 27-year-old Lori Hacking, who has been missing since Monday and is reportedly five weeks pregnant.



Hacking

Baird said police were at the landfill following up on leads a few days ago, but he couldn't provide any further details.

Search coordinators said about 275 volunteers split up Saturday to comb neighborhoods surrounding the area where Hacking was reported missing.

Baird said he doesn't believe investigators have met with the woman's husband, Mark Hacking, since Wednesday. He has been in a psychiatric hospital since police found him Tuesday running naked around a motel not far from his home.

Mark Hacking, 28, has been called a person of interest, not a suspect, in the case.

Speculation about his credibility was fueled by news that he never graduated from college or applied for medical school. He had told friends and family he was headed to medical school in North Carolina; Lori Hacking vanished days before the couple was to move.

Mark Hacking also had initially said his wife did not wake him up after coming home from an early morning jog,



Eraldo Soares, right, the father of missing jogger Lori Hacking, is comforted by Lori's stepmother Jana Soares during a press conference Thursday, July 22, 2004 in Salt Lake City.

as usual, and never showed up to work. But police confirmed Friday that Mark Hacking was at a furniture store buying a new mattress just before reporting to police that Lori was missing.

Baird said police were still checking

out a timeline provided by Hacking on the day his wife disappeared, one he said police consider puzzling.

"Because of the deception, we have to look at all aspects of what he has done," Baird said.

California man claims abuse in Egyptian jail

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A California man who was detained in Egypt for nearly a week says he was beaten and questioned before authorities released him without explanation.

Abdul Ghafoor Mahboob, a naturalized U.S. citizen who lives in the Los Angeles suburb of Culver City, said he was repeatedly beaten with a stick on his thighs and punched in the stomach and head.

"Without my prayers, I would have gone crazy," Mahboob told the Los Angeles Times in a phone interview

from London on Friday.

Mahboob, 26, said he was at the Cairo airport July 16, on his way home after spending the last seven months studying Arabic, when guards stopped him for what they said was a routine security check.

Mahboob said the officials handcuffed and blindfolded him and drove him to a prison.

Mahboob said he was asked questions about his family, education, work and mosque affiliation in the United States, but not about his political views.

He was released Thursday. Mahboob said that when he asked Egyptian officials why they had detained him, he was told, "We don't know."

Mahboob, who is of Afghan descent, emigrated to the United States in 1988. Until last year he worked as a fundraiser for an Islamic relief organization, the Times reported.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, which campaigned for Mahboob's release, said Friday it planned to file a complaint with the U.S. State Department and the Egyptian Embassy.

ACROSS THE NATION

Boat explosion on Mich. lake kills one

HOLLAND TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP)—A boat exploded, burst into flames and sank Saturday on a western Michigan lake, killing one of the two men aboard.

The explosion on the 1959 twin-engine wooden boat knocked the men unconscious, authorities said.

When the boat's owner, John M. Huegli, awoke, he tried but failed to rouse Peter C. Murray and abandoned the boat as it was consumed by flames on Lake Macatawa, Ottawa County Sheriff's Sgt. Kevin Allman told The Holland Sentinel.

Divers recovered the body of Murray, 52, of Ann Arbor. Huegli, 59, of Dexter, was hospitalized for minor injuries and released.

The cause of the explosion was unknown. Huegli told authorities that the boat had been fueled and vented Saturday morning, Allman said.

Colo. plane crash kills all three aboard

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP)—A twin-engine plane crashed onto a residential street Saturday, killing all three men aboard, destroying a minivan and setting off several small explosions.

Fort Collins police spokeswoman Rita Davis said the plane didn't hit any homes and no one on the ground was injured.

Residents within a quarter of a mile were evacuated for about five hours as firefighters cleaned up about 100 gallons of fuel that had spilled from the wreckage.

Aside from the minivan, no additional damage was immediately reported in the community 65 miles north of Denver.

Witnesses said the plane seemed to be having engine trouble before it crashed about noon.

FAA spokeswoman Nancy Corey said the plane was a Beechcraft 58. It had left the Fort Collins/Loveland Airport and was headed to Omaha, Neb.

The names of the victims had not been released Saturday night, but they were believed to have been from the Fort Collins area.

Hollywood calls for silly string ban

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hollywood residents and businesspeople tired of being in the silly-string crossfire every Halloween have asked the city to ban the colorful streams of compressed foam.

Councilman Tom LaBonge, whose district includes part of Hollywood, initially sought a complete ban but later opted to focus on Halloween, when residents complain the streets get jammed with silly-string slingers.

LaBonge said the non-biodegradable foam can fall into storm drains and ham marine life, and also can endanger police, particularly those on horseback.

On Friday, without debate, a Los Angeles City Council committee asked the city attorney's office to prepare an ordinance that eventually will be put to a vote before the council.

Several other communities, including Santa Clarita and New Orleans, have restrictions against the use of silly string.

Ill. senator hears of nephew's death in Iraq

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—A state senator learned his nephew had been killed in Iraq as the Illinois Senate debated death benefits for military personnel during Saturday's special budget session.

Republican Sen. Dave Sullivan was listening to the discussion on the Senate floor when he was told his 22-year-old nephew, Marine Lance Cpl. Vincent Sullivan, was killed Friday while serving his second tour of duty in Iraq, according to Senate Republican Leader Frank Watson.

"Suddenly and tragically, the legislation we were discussing about military benefits became starkly personal for one of our colleagues," said Watson, a Republican.

The Senate approved the legislation, which extends the state's traditional military death benefits to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, then observed a moment of silence for Sullivan and his family. The senator stayed through Saturday's session, helping the Senate approve a long-delayed state budget for the fiscal year that began July 1.

Asia

North Korea rejects US nuclear proposal

By **SANG-HUN CHOE**
AP WRITER

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea on Saturday rejected a U.S. suggestion that it follow the example of Libya and abandon its nuclear weapons programs to open the way for economic aid and improved ties with Washington.

Calling the American proposal “nothing but a sham offer,” the communist state reiterated that it would freeze its nuclear facilities as a first step toward their dismantling, but only if Washington provides energy aid, lifts economic sanctions and delists the North as a sponsor of terrorism.

“It is a daydream for the U.S. to contemplate forcing the (North) to lay down arms first under the situation where both are in a state of armistice and at war technically,” said an unidentified spokesman of the North’s Foreign Ministry.

The comments, carried by the North’s official news agency KCNA, came three days after a top U.S. disarmament official urged North Korean leader Kim Jong Il to learn from Libya and abandon his nuclear weapons development.

U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton said Wednesday that lessons learned from Libya’s pledge to eliminate

weapons of mass destruction can be used in six-nation talks aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear standoff.

Three rounds of talks on North Korea’s nuclear ambitions have been held in Beijing since last year, but none has produced a breakthrough. The United States, Russia, China, Japan and the two Koreas took part.

Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi took bold steps toward mending ties with the West in December when his government announced it would renounce chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, and opened its weapons laboratories to international inspectors. In return, Washington has begun lifting

sanctions, including travel restrictions, against the country.

On Saturday, the North Korean spokesman called the U.S. proposal “little worthy to be discussed any longer.”

“The U.S. is foolish enough to calculate that such mode imposed upon Libya would be accepted by the DPRK, too,” he said, using the acronym for his country’s official name, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

At the latest six-nation talks in June, the United States proposed that North disclose all its nuclear activities, helping to dismantle facilities and allow outside monitoring. Under the plan, some benefits would be withheld to

ensure the North cooperates.

North Korea said it would never scrap its nuclear programs first and hope to get reward later. Instead, it insisted on “reward for freeze,” because “there is no confidence between the DPRK and the U.S.”

A nuclear dispute flared in 2002 when U.S. officials said North Korea admitted running a secret nuclear program, based on highly enriched uranium, in violation of international agreements and a 1994 pledge to Washington that it would not develop nuclear bombs.

North Korea has since restarted its old plutonium program frozen under the 1994 pact.

India official: Hostage-takers want money

NEW DELHI (AP)—India’s foreign minister said Saturday that the unknown group of insurgents holding seven truck drivers hostage in Iraq appear to be motivated by money, not politics, and that the victims may be released soon.

“The indications from our diplomatic missions in Iraq, Kuwait and Cairo are that possibly this problem will be resolved soon,” External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh told reporters.

Commenting after he met relatives of one of the Indian hostages, Singh said, “Those who have done it do not appear to be associated with any political group. They appear to be irresponsible people who take such steps for money.” He did not elaborate.

Later, External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna told The Associated Press in a phone conversation, “We are at a delicate stage of negotiations. We are restricting our public statements.”

A group calling itself “The Holders

of the Black Banners” released videos Wednesday, Thursday and Friday showing the three Indian, three Kenyan and one Egyptian hostages. They had at first threatened to behead one every 72 hours, beginning Saturday night, if the truck drivers’ Kuwaiti employer did not cease business in Iraq and the hostages’ countries did not withdraw all their citizens from Iraq.

In the Friday video on the pan-Arab satellite channel Al-Jazeera, the kidnappers added to their demands, calling for the release of all Iraqi detainees in Kuwaiti and U.S. prisons and for the Kuwaiti transport company to pay compensation to families of people killed in violence in Fallujah.

The Friday tape did not appear to repeat the beheading threat, according to Al-Jazeera’s report of its contents.

The militants also gave the company a 48-hour deadline, but it was unclear if the original deadline had been extended to Sunday or the tape was old.

The families of Indian hostages said

Saturday they felt relieved that the captors seemed to have given more time to the victims’ employer, Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Co, which said it would take “all necessary measures” to save the lives of the seven captured truck drivers.

The company stopped short of saying it would meet the militants’ demand to halt all operations in Iraq.

On Saturday, Ram Murti, father of 33-year-old Indian hostage Antaryami, came to New Delhi from his village in northern India to meet with Indian officials.

He delivered a typed memo to the foreign minister’s home, asking Singh “to do whatever is possible to protect my son’s life.”

Thousands of Indians pay recruiting agents to get them visas and jobs with work contractors in the Gulf states, Iran and Iraq, where they can earn more money than at home. While the Indian government has officially discouraged its citizens from taking jobs in Iraq, it says it cannot control what they do once they reach Kuwait or other Middle East countries.



Singh

Jenkins’ kin say US obstructed visit

TOKYO (AP)—American family members of accused U.S. Army deserter Charles Jenkins said Saturday they were blocked from seeing their long-lost relative at a Tokyo hospital because U.S. and Japanese officials want to quickly settle the matter of the former sergeant, possibly through a plea-bargain.

The claims by Jenkins’ nephew, James Hyman, and his wife, Shirlee, came amid media reports that the Japanese government was urging Jenkins toward a plea-bargain. U.S. officials have been talking about taking him into custody after doctors cleared him of serious medical problems.

Jenkins, who is being treated at a Tokyo hospital, is wanted by the United States for allegedly abandoning his South Korean post in 1965 and defecting to North Korea. Under a bilateral agreement with Japan, U.S. authorities can take custody of Jenkins here.

The Hymans denied the charges against Jenkins, and said they were blocked from seeing him to prevent them from showing him a letter from the U.S. Army indicating that evidence used to back his desertion case did not exist.

Terror group fails to carry out attacks

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—The Jemaah Islamiyah terror group tried in the past year to carry out attacks in Southeast Asia but failed because it lacked funds, support from other militant operations and leadership within its ranks, officials said Friday.

The al-Qaida-linked organization’s ability to mount attacks was severely dented by the arrest of scores of militants after the Sept. 11 hijackings, including Hambali, the group’s operations chief, a Malaysian government official told The Associated Press.

Remnants of Jemaah Islamiyah have made several attempts to regroup in Indonesia, but one of their biggest problems was they “could not agree on a leader to take over from Hambali,” the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Hambali—a high-ranking al-Qaida leader and mastermind behind Jemaah Islamiyah—was Southeast Asia’s most-wanted fugitive before his August 2003 arrest in Thailand. Thai police turned him over to U.S. custody.

Hambali is suspected of orchestrat-

ing the Oct. 12, 2002, Bali bombings that killed 202 people, and of hosting at least two of the Sept. 11 hijackers in Kuala Lumpur ahead of the attacks in the United States.

A Malaysian security official also said the network had been severely crippled by arrests in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia in the last two years.

“The threat has subsided, but there are still a small group out there which could pose problems if authorities in the region let down their guard,” he said.

The government official also said authorities in Southeast Asia have in the past year gained the upper hand in cutting off Jemaah Islamiyah’s support from militant groups in the Philippines, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

He said the crackdown on cells in the region had also left the al-Qaida-linked group without funds to mount attacks.

“The threat posed by Jemaah Islamiyah especially in Indonesia is still there as several key members are still at large,” the official said. “But they are on the run ... it is important that authorities keep up this pressure.”

Thousands attend royal cremation in Bali

UBUD, Indonesia (AP)—More than 10,000 people flooded the streets of this usually tranquil village in Bali on Saturday to watch the first royal cremation in more than two decades, a spectacular event even by the island’s high standards.

Tjokorda Istri Niyang Muter, the 96-year-old sister of the last king of Ubud, was cremated at the royal compound as Hindu priests uttered mournful prayers and a traditional Indonesian orchestra played songs with percussion instruments.

About 1,000 people carried Muter in an 80-foot-high wooden burial tower that featured funeral masks and life-size effigies of a cow and dragon, which the Balinese believe will take her to the afterlife.

“It’s the grandest cremation I’ve ever seen. It was amazing,” said Bambang Ponco, a 30-year-old resident of Ubud. “This is our way of maintaining the culture and allows the people to show their love for the royal family.”

Muter died in June and palace officials had been preparing since then for the ceremony.

A ritual washing of the body was held July 16 followed by a ceremony

Tuesday where officials collected the dragon sculpture from the nearby town of Peliatan.

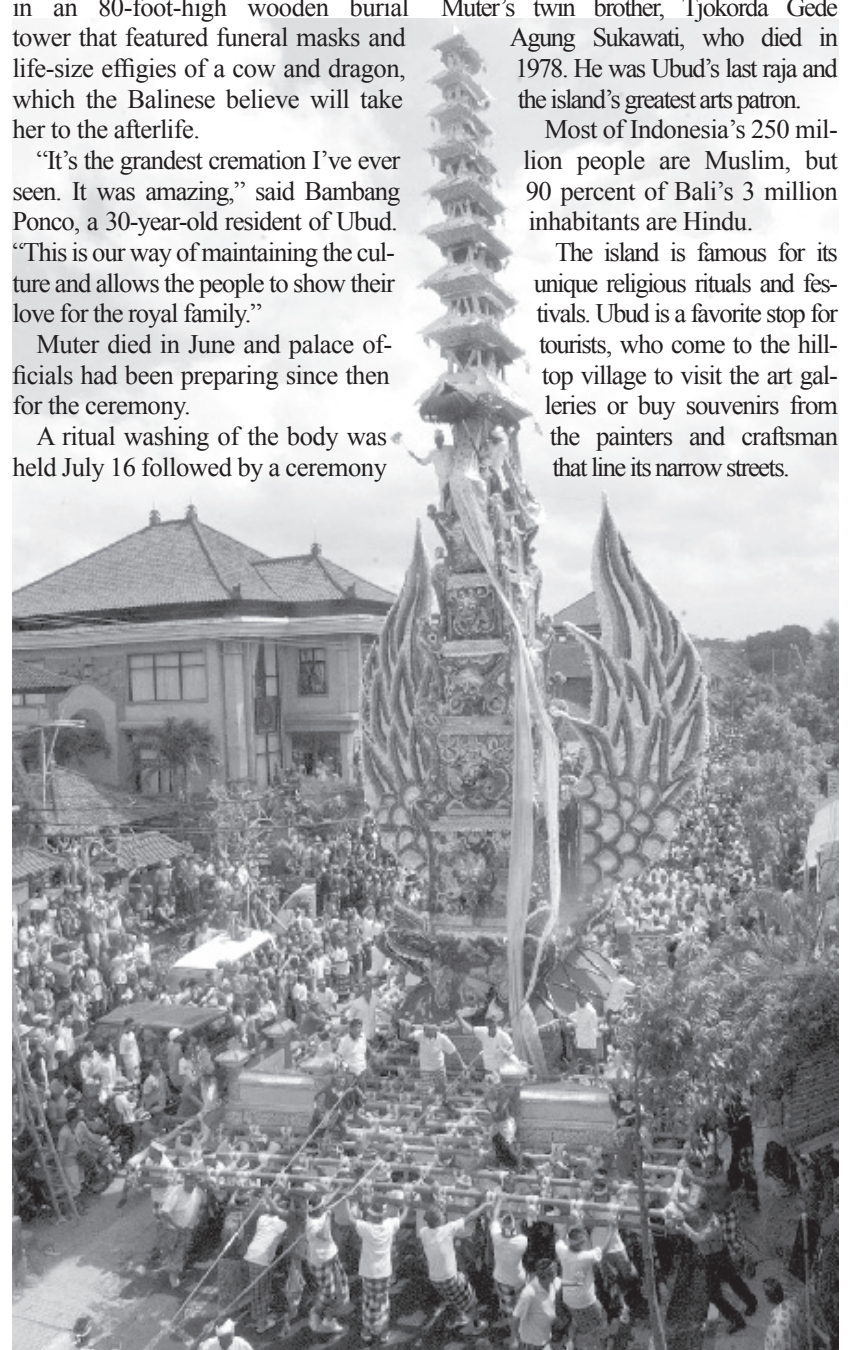
Just after dawn Saturday, the cremation ceremony began with prayers and ended almost 10 hours later with a Hindu priest taking a ceremonial bow and shooting the dragon which is supposed to release Muter’s soul.

At the same time, 58 Balinese from the nearby villages were cremated in a smaller ceremony about a mile from the royal procession.

The last royal funeral in Bali was for Muter’s twin brother, Tjokorda Gede Agung Sukawati, who died in 1978. He was Ubud’s last raja and the island’s greatest arts patron.

Most of Indonesia’s 250 million people are Muslim, but 90 percent of Bali’s 3 million inhabitants are Hindu.

The island is famous for its unique religious rituals and festivals. Ubud is a favorite stop for tourists, who come to the hill-top village to visit the art galleries or buy souvenirs from the painters and craftsman that line its narrow streets.



AP

A nine-story cremation tower containing the body of Ubud Princess Tjokorda Istri Muter is carried to her cremation site, Saturday in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.

NATO OKs deployment of Afghan troops

By PAUL GEITNER
AP WRITER

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP)—After months of delay, NATO has ordered hundreds more peacekeepers to Afghanistan to help provide security during presidential elections, but the deployment still appeared to fall short of 3,500 troops that were promised.

NATO ambassadors meeting late Friday approved two more battalions for Afghanistan, one each from Italy and Spain. A battalion has between 600 and 1,000 soldiers.

The alliance also cleared another 500 or so troops to beef up provincial reconstruction teams. Assuming the

battalions were large, that would still make only about 2,500 troops.

"We need a little bit more to get to 3,500," said Lt. Col. Ludger Terbruegen, spokesman at NATO's military headquarters in southern Belgium.

Cdr. Chris Henderson, a spokesman for the NATO-led peacekeeping force in the Afghan capital of Kabul, said a third battalion would be on standby as part of a reserve contingent outside the country. He said the alliance had yet to decide which countries would supply the reserve force but insisted "NATO has not failed in meeting its commitment."

U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Burns called the reinforcements "a significant step in the efforts of the international

community to help the Afghan people."

NATO took command of the international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan last summer. It currently has some 6,500 troops there, about half from Germany and Canada.

In October the alliance agreed to expand the force. But apart from Germany, which sent 240 soldiers to the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, NATO had been unable to persuade governments to provide needed troops.

The delay has cast doubt on the alliance's credibility as it seeks to reinvent itself as a global security force in the post-Cold War era.

The troops from Italy and Spain will arrive in Afghanistan by September

and remain for about two months, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said in a statement. The election is planned for Oct. 9.

De Hoop Scheffer would likely work the phones over the next few days to raise more troops, Terbruegen said.

The NATO troops serve apart from the 20,000-strong U.S.-led coalition force, which focuses on tracking down remnants of al-Qaida and the deposed Taliban government, mostly in the border area with Pakistan.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai pleaded with NATO leaders at their June summit to send more soldiers as quickly as possible.

Violence in Afghanistan this year has

killed more than 600 people, including soldiers, international workers and civilians.

The allies committed themselves to increase troop levels to 10,000, but still struggled to come up with the soldiers.

France and other NATO members objected to an American proposal that NATO's elite new response force be deployed, arguing it should be saved for emergencies, not peacekeeping.

The NATO statement said the Italian battalion is "an element" of the rapid response force and will act as a reserve for the Spanish, who will provide a "quick reaction force."

They will probably be based in the capital, Kabul, but able to dash around the country to help out.

Pakistan releases three nuke scientists

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan authorities released a former nuclear scientist and two close aides to Abdul Qadeer Khan, the disgraced founder of Pakistan's nuclear program, after holding them for about seven months on suspicion of leaking nuclear technology to other countries, an army spokesman said Saturday.

Dr. Nazeer Ahmad, former director general at Pakistan's main nuclear weapons lab, was among 11 men arrested in December after the U.N. nuclear watchdog reported that some Pakistanis were involved in selling nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea.

Brig. Sajawal Khan and Maj. Isamul Haq, the close aides to Khan, also were freed.

Khan admitted in February to passing nuclear technology to other countries but was pardoned by President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who cited his service to the nation. He remains confined to his home in the capital, Islamabad.

On Saturday, army spokesman Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan told The Associated Press that the government has freed the three men.

"I confirm that they were freed Friday night and they have gone to their homes," he said. He wouldn't say what prompted their release.

The release came a week after the men's lawyer claimed that a special Supreme Court board had extended their detention for 90 more days. The government would neither confirm nor deny the claim.

The government can hold high-profile suspects for up to a year under an anti-terrorism law.

Sultan said on Saturday that out of the 11 people picked up in December, only former nuclear scientist Mohammad Farooq remained in government custody. Farooq also is suspected of leaking technology on Khan's orders.

Sultan said Saturday that Khan is not under "house arrest."

"His status is very clear. He was pardoned by the President of Pakistan, but the government has asked him (Khan) to curtail his movements because of security concerns," he said.

Pakistan, India hopeful for peace talks



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...

A Bangladeshi flood victim wades through flooded streets with her children in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Friday, July 23, 2004. Floods killed another 27 people in Bangladesh raising the death toll to nearly 200, as relief workers struggled to reach millions of flood-hit people waiting for food, drinking water and medicines.

AP

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan and India expressed renewed optimism for peace after a rare meeting Friday between this nation's military ruler and the foreign minister of nuclear-rival India—the highest-level talks since a new government took power in New Delhi in May.

Both countries agreed that a solution to the decades-old Kashmir dispute must be reached quickly, and "to the satisfaction of both sides."

Natwar Singh, who stayed on in Islamabad after attending a regional conference earlier this week, met with President Gen. Pervez Musharraf for about 90 minutes Friday at his office in Rawalpindi, the headquarters of Pakistan's army and the general's home since he refused to take up residence at the president's house in the capital.

"No aspect of our relationship, including Jammu and Kashmir, was left out of our warm, frank and realistic discussions," Singh said in a statement. "India and Pakistan are committed to discuss and settle all bilateral issues, including that of Jammu and Kashmir."

Musharraf also pledged Pakistan's commitment to making the peace talks a success, and said a solution to Kashmir must be reached in a "reasonable" time frame.

"The president emphasized the need for simultaneous progress on all issues and most notably the central issue of Jammu and Kashmir," Musharraf's office said.

The two countries have fought two of three wars over the Himalayan region since gaining independence from Britain in 1947. The region is split between them, but both claim it in its entirety.

More than 65,000 people have died, most of them civilians killed on India's side of the region, since an Islamic insurgency began in 1989. Pakistan accuses India of human rights violations. India says that Pakistan backs terrorism.

Despite hopes for peace that intensified after Musharraf met with then-Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in January on the sidelines of another regional summit, the two countries still have hundreds of thousands of troops faced off in the mountainous region.

India boosted military spending by 27 percent this year, and Pakistan raised its defense budget by 7 percent.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshed Kasuri acknowledged this week in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corp. that the money is being diverted from much-needed social programs in this country of 150 million, which suffers from deep poverty and high rates of illiteracy.

Many hope an eventual peace dividend could lift the fortunes of hundreds of millions of people in the two countries, which comprise about one-fifth of the world's population.

"I leave Pakistan with renewed determination to work with Pakistan bilaterally, to normalize our relations and to resolve differences," Singh, who has met with Kasuri three times in the past month, said in the statement.

He complimented Pakistan's government and people for the warm welcome and treatment of his delegation during the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit this week, saying it "touched us deeply."



US will donate food aid to North Korea

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States will donate 50,000 metric tons of food to North Korea to help overcome continuing shortages in that country, the State Department said Friday.

Spokesman Richard Boucher said the gesture is unrelated to U.S. efforts to negotiate the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

The food will be distributed by the U.N.'s World Food Program.

U.S. decisions on food aid are made on the basis of need, competing needs elsewhere, and the WFP's ability to make deliveries to vulnerable groups and to monitor distribution.

Boucher said the WFP has told U.S. officials that the North Koreans have allowed an increased number of monitoring visits to distribution sites in the country. Also, he said, WFP evaluations of family food security conditions have been more frequent.

But, Boucher said, North Korea "still falls short of meeting international standards for humanitarian access that are accepted by other recipients of international food assistance."

Death toll from Asian flooding up to 705

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—A crowded boat ferrying flood refugees to safety in central Bangladesh capsized, drowning seven people as the death toll from this year's monsoon flooding in South Asia reached 705, officials and news reports said Saturday.

The floods have killed 396 in India, 202 in Bangladesh, 102 in Nepal and five in Pakistan. Most of the deaths occurred from drowning, building collapses, electrocution from downed power lines, waterborne diseases or landslides.

In Bangladesh, seven people, including three children, drowned Friday after a boat carrying nearly 35 villagers to a nearby shelter capsized in swirling flood waters 50 miles north of Dhaka, the capital, the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha news agency said.

Overflowing rivers fed by heavy monsoon rains inundated new areas in central Bangladesh, including of Dhaka.

US, S. Korea agree to military changes

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. and South Korean officials have agreed on a plan to relocate all 8,000 U.S.

military personnel in Seoul to another city south of the capital, the Pentagon announced Friday.

The personnel will move to the Pyongtaek area, about 50 miles south of Seoul, by the end of 2008, the Pentagon said in a statement.

In addition, the two governments have agreed to move soldiers from the 2nd Infantry Division, located between Seoul and the border with North Korea, south to Pyongtaek, but no timetable for the move has been determined, the Pentagon said.

The decision was reached during a round of U.S.-South Korean talks held in Washington this week.

"This relocation agreement helps us meet our enduring commitment to the defense of Korea and to the security and stability of the region," said Richard Lawless, deputy under secretary of defense for Asia Pacific affairs, in a statement.

World

Iraq leader urges Egypt to stay course

By RAVI NESSMAN
AP WRITER

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Iraqi interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi urged Egypt on Saturday to stand fast in the face of the kidnapping of one of its diplomats and ignore militants' demand that it abandon any plans to lend security assistance to Iraq.

"It is time for us to close ranks to fight terrorism. There is no way to budge to terrorists and give them what they want," Allawi said in Damascus, Syria. "The only way to deal with terrorism is to promote justice and to close ranks, and we hope Egypt and the Egyptian government will act accordingly."

Allawi spoke just hours after gunmen dressed as police snatched the leader of an Iraqi government-owned construction company.

The brazen attacks suggested insurgents were growing bolder, particularly since kidnapers scored a stunning victory by forcing the Philippines to withdraw troops to save the life of a Filipino truck driver last week. The violence also cast a pall over Allawi's tour through the region to persuade reluctant Arab and Muslim countries to send troops here.

Surrender of al-Qaida chief negotiated

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—An amnesty period for Saudi militants ended with no major figures netted, but a cleric said Friday that negotiations were under way to try to get the purported al-Qaida chief in the Arabian Peninsula to surrender.

The Saudi Interior Ministry, seeking to encourage last-minute surrenders, said those who contacted authorities before the amnesty expired at midnight Thursday could still benefit from the offer, even if they don't turn themselves in until later. There was no word Friday if any militants made such an arrangement.

Sheik Safar al-Hawaly told The Associated Press that an intermediary was sent to al-Qaida chief Saleh Mohammed al-Aoofi on Thursday night.

The cleric would not say where al-Aoofi was. Saudi security forces detained his wife and three children after raiding his Riyadh hideout late Tuesday and finding the head of slain American hostage Paul M. Johnson Jr.

The U.S. Embassy in Riyadh confirmed Friday that the head found in a freezer was that of Johnson, an engineer with Lockheed Martin who was kidnapped June 12 by an al-Qaida cell and beheaded six days later.

"We did see the head on Thursday and have confirmed that it is the head of Paul Johnson, unfortunately," embassy spokeswoman Carol Kalin told The Associated Press in a call from the Saudi capital.

Speaking by phone from the southern Saudi province of al-Baha, al-Hawaly said he was negotiating with another 15 militants who had indicated they wanted to accept the amnesty but had reservations.

MOSCOW (AP)—Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said on Saturday that Baghdad would like to have Russian peacekeepers, but the Kremlin restated its refusal to become involved in the messy conflict.

"We need Russian peacekeepers," Zebari said, according to the Interfax news agency.

But Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Moscow had no intention of becoming involved.

"This issue wasn't looked into," Lavrov said at a news conference. "There are no such plans."

Lavrov said that Russia was willing to consider restructuring Iraq's multibillion dollar debt through the Paris Club of creditor nations and offering economic assistance and personnel training.

President Vladimir Putin said last year that Russia in principle would be willing to write off more than half of Iraq's \$8 billion debt to Moscow.

Militants grabbed Mohammed Mamdouh Helmi Qutb, described as the third-ranking diplomat at the Egyptian mission here, as he walked out of a mosque Friday. In a video released by "The Lions of Allah Brigade," the mili-

Al-Qaida statement threatens Australia

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—An online statement by a group representing itself as al-Qaida's European branch threatened on Saturday to turn Australia into "pools of blood" if it doesn't withdraw its troops from Iraq.

It was the second statement in a week by the Tawhid Islamic Group, a previously unknown group which on Wednesday threatened attacks in Bulgaria and Poland if their troops remained in Iraq.

"We call upon you to leave Iraq before your country turns to pools of blood," the statement warned the Australian government.

"We will shake the earth under your feet as we did in Indonesia, and lines of car bombs will not cease, God willing," the statement said, referring to the 2002 Bali

bombing that killed 202 people, many of them Australian tourists.

The al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah was blamed for that attack.

The Tawhid statement also warned Italy to comply with an earlier warning.

"We advise you to accept our offer and if you don't, you will see the lines of cars laden with explosives hit your towns and turn your nights to mornings, God willing. We swear you will see hell with your eyes," the Tawhid statement said.

The statement did not elaborate on what offer it was referring to, but earlier this month, the al-Qaida-linked Brigades of Abu Hafs al-Masri that had threatened a massive strike unless Premier Silvio Berlusconi—a staunch supporter of President Bush—was removed from office.

tants said they had taken Qutb to deter Egypt from sending troops.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit appealed to the kidnapers Saturday to show mercy and said his government was working quietly to free Qutb and an Egyptian truck driver held by other militants.

"We will not abandon Egyptian citi-

zens in that way," he said, adding that "it is a very sensitive situation."

Early Saturday, gunmen grabbed Raad Adnan, general director of Al-Mansour Contracting Co., in an audacious daylight operation in southeastern Baghdad.

The kidnapers, wearing police uniforms, set up a fake checkpoint in the Zaicuna neighborhood and stopped

Adnan's car, taking him and his driver hostage, according to police Sgt. Ahmed Ismael. Adnan's driver was quickly released, Ismael said.

Al-Mansour is a government-owned construction company that does building work for Iraq's ministries. Adnan, a construction engineer, was a member of the Baath party and helped build some of Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces.

The 15-month-old insurgency, punctuated by the kidnappings, almost daily bombings, attacks and sabotage, has badly damaged Iraq's efforts to rebuild the country after years of war and sanctions.

On Saturday, gunmen in three cars attacked a convoy carrying west Baghdad's police chief as he passed near the town of Mahmoudiya south of Baghdad. Two bodyguards were killed, but the police chief, Brig. Sabah Fahad, escaped unharmed, said Mahmoudiya hospital director, Dr. Dawoud al-Taie.

Attackers in two cars opened fire on a group of policemen at a checkpoint in the al-Shurta district of Baghdad on Saturday, injuring seven policemen, the Interior Ministry said.

A rocket exploded in the downtown Jubairya district in northern city of Samarra killing one man and injuring three other civilians early Saturday, police Maj. Sadoun al-Dulaimi said.



AP
Iraqi Olympic Committee worker Sadad Hussain Ali demonstrates a finger vise at Al-Shaab Stadium in Baghdad, Iraq, Saturday, July 24, 2004. Other picture shows committee official Talib Mutan displaying a steel chamber with interior spikes.

Iraq shows Odai's Olympic torture tools

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Torture equipment used by Saddam Hussein's slain son, Odai, to punish underperforming Iraqi athletes was displayed Saturday at a Baghdad sports stadium in advance of the opening of the Olympics next month in Athens.

Journalists were shown medieval-style torture equipment, including an "iron maiden-like" casket with metal spikes fixed to the inside that athletes

had been forced into and chain whips with steel barbs the size of tennis balls attached to the end.

"During the old regime, Odai was looking for results and he wanted winners. He didn't like second place," Talib Mutan, an Iraqi Olympics Committee official, told Associated Press Television News.

"If the athletes didn't come in first, they were punished. And he would punish the people around the

athletes, their managers and coaches included," Mutan said.

Odai, who ran the Olympic committee while his father ruled Iraq, and his younger brother Qusai were killed in a fierce gunbattle with U.S. forces a year ago in the northern city of Mosul.

Mutan said athletes who earned Odai's wrath were tortured in various ways, through beatings, sleep deprivation and being forced to walk barefoot over hot

asphalt during Iraq's searing summer.

The official said suggestions had been made to display the torture equipment in a museum, but there had been no final decision.

The International Olympic Committee reinstated Iraq's national Olympic committee in February after it was suspended following the fall of Saddam's regime in 2003, enabling Iraqi athletes to compete at this year's Summer Games.

Health & Fitness

Life & Style

Bush twins shown with pretty smiles, not personalities

By ROBIN GIVHAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

The president's daughters have emerged from their media-free zone of comfort into the flattering spotlight of Vogue.

The August issue of the fashion magazine includes an interview with the recent college graduates as well as two portraits by photographer Patrick Demarchelier. The opening picture features the two young women in strapless ball gowns. Jenna's ruby red dress is by Oscar de la Renta, a designer favored by her mother. Barbara is wearing a similar ivory gown by Calvin Klein. They are accessorized with an array of borrowed diamonds. The dresses are classic designs—styles a designer would keep on hand in the showroom but wouldn't bother to put on the runway.

The 22-year-old twins look like debutantes, minor royals, or that particular New York species of well-groomed, pedigreed and socially connected woman known as the "Bright Young Thing." For much of the time their father has been in the White House, they were kept under wraps. Occasionally they emerged from their protected world to be snapped attending a fashion show or traveling with their mother. The only significant ink on them has been on police reports detailing their ill-advised underage drinking.

This public debut is occasioned by their having graduated from college and deciding to campaign for their father. "The decision was completely up to Jenna and Barbara. They made the decision in late winter, early spring after thinking about it for some time," says Gordon Johndroe, the first lady's press secretary. "They thought this would be a nice interview to start with."

Barbara made her campaign debut Tuesday, accompanying her father on a trip to Michigan and Minnesota. Jenna's first foray was on Friday. So far, they have been quiet cheerleaders and are unsure of how they might ultimately be dispatched. But in Vogue, Jenna makes clear they are not interested in political process and are doing this for love of Dad.

Both the president and first lady have seen the story and the accompanying photographs and "they like it," Johndroe says. "They think their daughters look great and it's a nice article."

What's not to like? The story notes that the daughters' post-graduation plans include Jenna's desire to work for a charter school and Barbara's interest in working with AIDS-afflicted children in Eastern Europe and Africa. Both have surrounded themselves with good friends who say such nice things about them that readers might be led to believe these young women have never burped publicly, let alone had a grumpy day.

The story's headline promises that the

daughters are about to "give the country a glimpse of who they really are by joining their father on the campaign trail." But those who spend any time on such trails argue that the goal is to reveal not one's real self but a perfectly polished, eloquently scripted facsimile.

The same can be said about making your debut in Vogue. This is not the kind of magazine that traffics in hu-

rarefied worlds. And when Vogue shot Sean "P.Diddy" Combs in 1999, the spread helped legitimize Combs to the fashion establishment as an ebony-skinned Cary Grant and pronounced young minority millionaires among the logical heirs to couture.

In Vogue, everyone glows. People are more elegantly groomed and styled than they will ever be again. In the in-

late Helmut Newton, whose vision of this shoot might have employed leg braces, whips and a donkey.

Instead, the Vogue photographs are coolly beautiful, aloof and controlled. The opening portrait, shot in Manhattan at the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute with the two women in their classic ball gowns, could easily hang alongside those of their mother as first lady. Barbara's conservative Calvin Klein gown is particularly striking. She has a well-documented interest in fashion, attending shows by her friend the designer Zac Posen and interning in the Proenza Schouler showroom in New York, but this dress hardly suggests an adventurous spirit.

In fact, the young women are not particularly interested in such gala gowns and their accouterments. "They've always shied away from the pampered, debutante image," says Julia Reed, author of the accompanying story. She describes herself as an "acquaintance of the family" and has spent significant time writing about it.

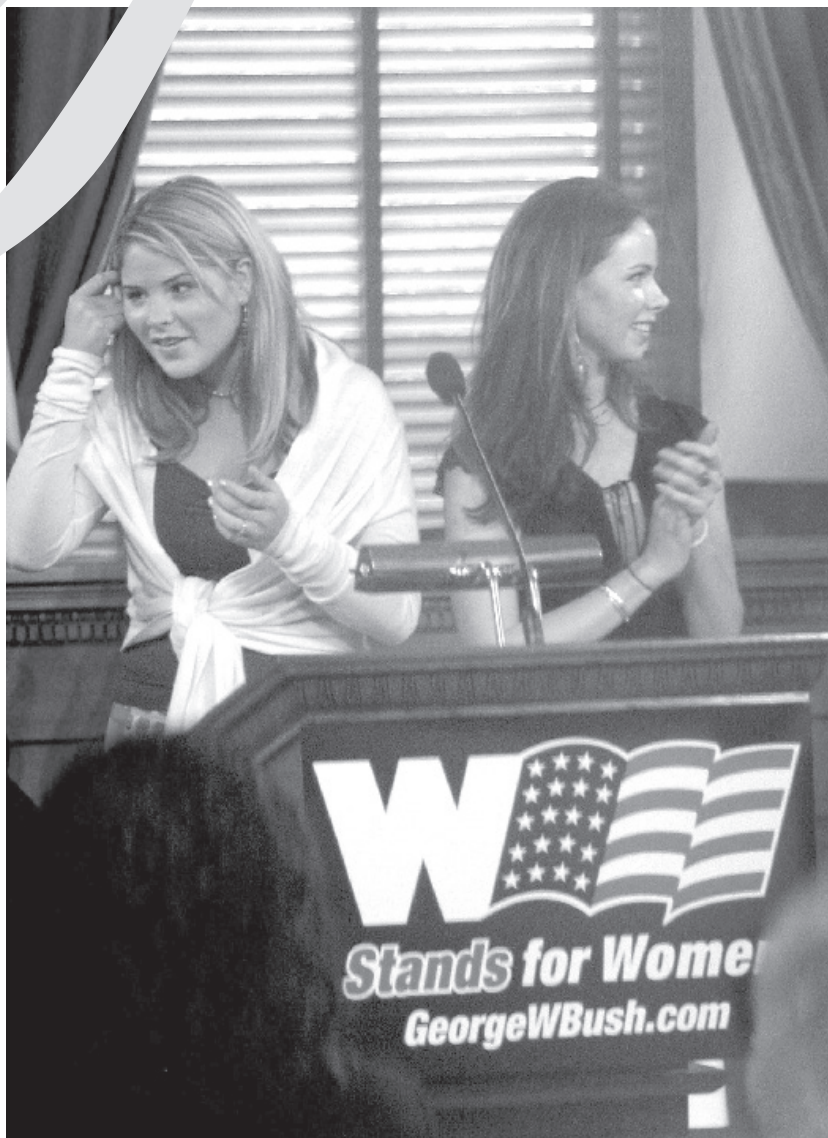
The clothes transform the daughters into archetypes; they do not reflect the personality of the wearers. Their debut has all of the intimacy of a state dinner receiving line.

But the portrait does offer this: They are ready to play a new role. In the picture's formality and control, it reflects their emergence as public, political daughters.

In their life story as told in public photographs, they've gone from indiscreet college students to Stepford daughters. One longs for photographs that tell of the intellectual curiosity that took them abroad or of the "natural effervescence" that Reed found so compelling.

The second photograph has the twins in more casual attire. Barbara wears an Alberta Ferretti camisole and Max Mara skirt. Jenna is in a Moschino top, Tommy Hilfiger jacket and trousers from Joe's Jeans. (The twins wear Italian and American labels but no French.) They are walking toward the camera, playing the roles of chic girls about town. The setting is Schiller's Liquor Bar, one of those New York restaurants where town cars idle out front and the menu is voyeuristically working class, with a wine list that is cheap, decent and good.

They wear another kind of uniform, one that speaks of youth, hipness and moneyed polish. The clothes tease the viewer, offering the faintest whiff of the twins' personalities. Is Jenna in jeans and jacket because she is more casual? More urbane? One wishes the caption said something like: Jeans, model's own. The restaurant is empty. It was closed for the shoot. There's none of the liveliness that makes it such an enticing place. No "cheap" or "decent" wine on the tables. It's just a tidy backdrop for two perfect smiles.



Jenna, left, and Barbara Bush, stand Wednesday, July 21, 2004, at a podium at a private meeting in Columbus, Ohio, with women volunteering for their father's re-election. The twin daughters of President Bush met privately with volunteers at the Ohio Bush-Cheney campaign headquarters, then spoke at the Statehouse to hundreds of invited supporters from the W Stands for Women coalition.

manizing reality—one that finds reassurance in warts, foibles and missteps.

People who appear in Vogue never look like their true selves—they look better. They become their own fantasy. The magazine put Oprah Winfrey on its cover in October 1998 and the media mogul admitted that at long last she was convinced of her own beauty. When Hillary Clinton appeared on the cover in December that year, during the impeachment proceedings, her spirit got such a boost that she thanked the magazine's editor in her autobiography. When Marion Jones appeared in 2001, the photographs not only reiterated the sex appeal of the athletic female physique but also pronounced it fashionable in the most

stant that their photograph is taken—when the stylists, the makeup artist, the hairdresser, the lighting person, the assistants have all stepped out of the frame—there is perfection.

Demarchelier is known for a style that is natural but beautiful. He photographed Laura Bush for Harper's Bazaar in 2001. He is not a trickster in the manner of David LaChapelle, whose photographs are filled with saturated color, his subjects transformed into caricatures. Demarchelier does not offer the cinema verite quality of Ellen von Unwerth, whose subjects often seem to have been captured unaware in a melancholy reverie. And he does not engage in the homoeroticism of Bruce Weber or the sexual provocation of the

Ala. basement yields civil rights trove

By KYLE WINGFIELD
AP WRITER

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP)—A sheriff's deputy who was cleaning a basement storage room stumbled upon a box containing a trove of artifacts from the civil rights era, including black-and-white mug shots of Rosa Parks and a young Martin Luther King Jr.

Historians called the discovery a significant find that provides a one-of-a-kind time capsule into the early days of the civil rights struggle. The 1956 mug shot of King after being arrested in the historic Montgomery bus boycott could be a record of his very first arrest, said Horace Huntley, director of the Oral History Project at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

"I think that is a tremendous find," Huntley said. "It gives us a window to the past that we absolutely would not see otherwise."

The mug shots were in albums that were segregated by race and gender. About midway through a book marked "Negro Male" that spans from 1948 to 1965 are mug shots of King, famed civil rights attorney Fred Gray and others.

The mug shot of King depicts the intense determination he relied on to spearhead the civil rights movement. Above his stare is written in blue ink, "Dead 4-4-68"—the date he was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn. King is dressed in a jacket and tie and wearing a slate around his neck with his arrest number 7089.

In another book for black women, Rosa Parks also holds a slate with her arrest number, 7053, and gazes at the camera in a manner suggesting she had been booked before. It was her arrest nearly three months earlier for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus that sparked the boycott and, to a large degree, the greater civil rights movement.

King and Parks were among the dozens of people arrested in the Feb. 22, 1956 boycott. An accompanying jail log lists all 76 people arrested on a grand jury indictment for violating Alabama's anti-boycott law.

"This is the first time we've found something like this since I've been here," said Montgomery County Chief Deputy Derrick Cunningham, who made the lucky find last week while performing housecleaning duties at the sheriff's department. "And trust me, I've been looking hard, I've been looking long. To be able to come across this type of information, it means a lot."

For Cunningham, who is black, the documents are personally significant as well.

"A lot of those people paved the way for us to ride around and be deputies," he said. "They stood up for the rights of people sitting on the bus. They stood up for the rights of people to get jobs."

Lucasfilm unveils new 'Star Wars' title

By **ANTHONY BREZNICAN**
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The final “Star Wars” prequel is just “Episode III” no more. Lucasfilm announced its new title Saturday: “Revenge of the Sith.”

The movie, set for release in May 2005, will link the prequels with the original “Star Wars” trilogy by showing how Luke Skywalker’s father, Anakin, went from a sweet-natured slave boy to the galaxy-crushing villain Darth Vader. The Sith is the evil sect that corrupts Anakin (played by Hayden Christensen) by drawing him into the dark side of the Force, the cosmic power that balances the universe.

Lucasfilm announced the new title at the annual Comic-Con International, the annual gathering of tens of thousands of sci-fi and superhero fans.

It was a risky move—some of the notoriously fickle “Star Wars” admirers initially bristled at previous prequel titles “The

Phantom Menace” and “Attack of the Clones.”

“Star Wars” creator and filmmaker George Lucas did not attend the event, but sent fan relations chief Steve Sansweet in his place.

Sansweet announced the title by pulling off a baseball jersey to reveal a black T-shirt emblazoned with “Revenge of the Sith.”

“For some time now, the naming of a new ‘Star Wars’ movie has taken on some special meaning among core fans who love to take part in guessing games and speculation before a title is announced,” Sansweet told nearly 6,500 convention attendees. “And then (they) engage in debate once it is ... so let the debate begin.”

Minutes later, a sampling of audience members dressed as Jedis, stormtroopers and other “Star Wars” characters showed they approved.

“I thought it was great, I loved it,” said Barren Wright, 35, a graphic designer from Modesto who was dressed



Star Wars booth volunteer Edward Karl, dressed as a Stormtrooper, holds up a “Revenge of the Sith” t-shirt as customers line up to buy the shirts at the San Diego Convention Center during the annual Comic-Con International convention held in San Diego Saturday, July 24, 2004.

as the green-armored bounty hunter Boba Fett. “This takes it back to the classic trilogy, It’s a smart move by Lucasfilm to

tie it all together since the logo and everything is identical to ‘Return of the Jedi.’”

Wright said the symmetry

between the titles reflects the story lines.

Anyone who has seen the original “Star Wars” from 1977

AP

knows that the good guys—that is the Jedi—would be wiped out by Darth Vader in “Episode III” just as Vader and his evil Empire were toppled in 1983’s “Return of the Jedi.”

In addition to the title, Lucasfilm also sent concept artist Ryan Church to show off drawings of a Wookiee tree civilization from “Episode III” and played footage of Christensen’s climactic light-saber duel—minus all the special effects—with co-star Ewan McGregor, who plays Obi-Wan Kenobi.

“Return of the Jedi” was originally to be titled “Revenge of the Jedi.” Some advance promotional material even featured that title, but Lucas changed it later in production.

“This time, George tells us he’s going to keep ‘Revenge’ in the title,” Sansweet said.

He had one other announcement for fans: “Revenge of the Sith” T-shirts would go on sale inside Comic-Con’s main hall in five minutes.

ABC to offer 24-hour news until election

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC News will run a 24-hour news service available on digital cable, the Internet and some cell phones through Election Day in what may be a precursor to a service offered full time in the future.

The venture, “ABC News Now,” begins operating at noon Monday, presenting gavel-to-gavel coverage of the Democratic National Convention, anchored by Peter Jennings.

The service will offer national and local news highlights and rerun material—“Nightline” the next day, for instance.

“We wouldn’t be doing this if we didn’t suspect there was a business for us in the long run,” ABC News President David Westin said Thursday.

ABC News once considered, and passed on, starting a cable news affiliate that would compete with CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC.

Westin said “ABC News Now” would differ from those networks because it will be offered on multiple platforms and will have some local programming. ABC’s affiliates are being encouraged to place some of their local news, weather and sports on the service.

Jennings will anchor a total of 23 hours of daily coverage from the GOP and Democratic conventions on “ABC News Now,” in contrast to the six hours that the broadcast network will be on the air during the conventions.

The venture will offer a daily political newscast at 1 p.m. EDT during the conventions and a show, “Trail Mix,”

anchored by Sam Donaldson and Hari Sreenivasan.

How many people who will watch—or even be able to watch—the service is an open question.

The 10 ABC-owned stations will offer “ABC News Now” to its 3.5 million customers that have digital cable. Stations participating are in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Houston, Raleigh, N.C., Flint, Mich., Toledo, Ohio, and Fresno, Calif.

ABC is trying to persuade some of its 64 affiliates with digital capabilities—a potential 18.5 million more homes—to sign on, too.

It’s also available for those with broadband Internet access. Some services, like America Online, will offer it for free as part of its monthly subscriber fee; otherwise, it will cost \$4.95 per month to subscribe.

Sprint PCS Vision phone customers will also be able to see “ABC News Now” for \$9.95 a month.

It’s a true experiment; ABC has no idea how many people will be able to see or will watch if they can.

“I am eager to find out,” Westin said.

He would not say how much ABC News has spent to get it operating; ABC increased its 24-hour staffing last year in anticipation of the Iraq war and after being caught flat-footed with the space shuttle explosion story.

The network will not sell advertising for “ABC News Now,” although local affiliates are free to do so, Westin said.

Ashanti, celebrities party to save the music

By **DERRIK J. LANG**
AP WRITER

EAST HAMPTON, N.Y. (AP)—Women gladly traded their heels for flip-flops at a VH1 Save the Music Foundation benefit, mostly for comfort but also for a good cause.

Music and Mojitos, an exclusive backyard affair, was held Friday night at the hilly Hamptons home of foundation board member Morris Reed and his wife, Jaci Wilson Reid. Attendees were able to check their predictably uncomfortable shoes at the door for a pair of flip-flops adorned with a bullseye (courtesy of event co-sponsor Target, of course).

Host and charity diva Jaci Wilson Reid said she just wanted to make “people feel more comfortable.” But guest of honor Ashanti opted to keep

her strappy silver Manolo Blahniks on her feet throughout the night.

“It’s quite dangerous,” Ashanti said of schlepping down the hill to the stage and back up to the Reids’ house, where she stayed hidden for most of the evening while guests outside drowned themselves in champagne and noshed on crab cakes.

When Ashanti, wearing a glittering Dior gown, did teeter out to greet the crowd, she extolled the virtues of music in education, which is Save the Music’s raison d’être.

“It’s kind of whack that they’re trying to take away instruments from our children,” Ashanti told the crowd.

Whack indeed.

Inside the Reids’ home, Ashanti gushed to The Associated Press about her upcoming third album, due out in

November. The 23-year-old wouldn’t divulge potential collaborations, but she did promise an “amazing, totally different” album complete with some “club bangers,” a departure for the soft-spoken crooner.

“I would love to have a sixth-grade band on one of my tracks,” Ashanti noted.

The event was scant on celebs. Star Jones, Ja Rule, Johnny Knoxville and Jason Lewis were a few of the no-shows. However, Russell Simmons, Jalen Rose of the Toronto Raptors and a Hilary Duff look-and-sound-alike called Angel were present.

Sting appeared as well - in the form of an autograph. A guitar signed by the former Police leader sold for \$20,000 to a generous blonde in the crowd.

Cause-savvy VH1 President Christina Norman, fresh from

the International AIDS Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, excitedly chatted about the channel’s new AIDS awareness campaign, the first issue VH1 has supported since Save the Music began in 1997.

“Our viewers are the type of people who were politically active about issues in the past,” Norman said, “but now is the perfect time to remind them about the most important medical issue in our world.”

The evening ended with the distribution of jelly purse gift bags, filled with goodies like Bacardi Limon and mojito-flavored lip gloss, and an afterparty at Resort, an East Hampton enclave down the road.

Before departing down the hill, attendees were given back their pricey heels in a green gift bag—but they could keep the flip-flops.

TiVo battles Hollywood over copyrights

By **MAY WONG**
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—A plan by TiVo Inc. to let its users transfer recorded TV shows to other devices is running into opposition from Hollywood studios and the National Football League, which fear their copyrighted content could get loose on the Internet.

The studios and the NFL filed papers with the Federal Communications Commission last week seeking to block the agency’s approval of TiVo’s proposed new service.

TiVo, based in Alviso, Calif., is the leading provider of digital video recorders, which let users easily record TV shows onto hard disks, skip commercials

and pause live broadcasts. The company’s plans to introduce TiVo To Go, which will allow users to shuttle recorded programs to other TiVo-compatible devices, including laptops and personal computers, have been long awaited.

TiVo officials declined to comment on the copyright objections Thursday but issued a statement: “We are hopeful (the FCC) rules in favor of technology innovation that respects the rights of both consumers and artists.”

TiVo has said it wants to give users more flexibility in how and where they view their recorded shows—on an airplane or a road trip, for example—and to let them share the content with a few friends. The company says it plans to incorporate

copy-restriction technologies to limit the number of devices to which the shows can be transferred, preventing unfettered Internet distribution.

The content companies don’t think TiVo’s proposed safeguards are adequate enough to block users from sending their recorded shows to strangers’ devices across the globe, said Fritz Attaway, executive vice president and legal counsel for the Motion Picture Association of America, the Hollywood lobbying arm that filed the opposition papers.

“We don’t have a problem if you want to move the content to your summer home, or your boat, but the TiVo application does not require any kind of relationship with the sender,” At-

taway said Thursday. “It could be to a nightclub in Singapore.”

Many consumer electronics companies say such networked devices are bound to become standard in the ever-more-digital world, but they acknowledge that they must first appease Hollywood and other content providers’ concerns over copyrights.

Content companies have been fighting hard on Capitol Hill for rules that would restrict what they consider illegal distribution of copyrighted works. The industry’s successful lobbying led to the FCC rule forcing electronics companies to certify that their recording gadgets have technologies to prevent mass distribution.

That’s why TiVo is now seeking the FCC’s approval.

Grandparents look past mom to find family resemblance

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I have a 1-year-old daughter with a man I chose not to marry. Every time I take my little girl to visit her grandparents, they bombard me with comments about who my child favors. Everything, from his family's point of view, comes from her father—down to her baby noises and facial gestures.

What makes this so hurtful is it's simply not true. I have tried to politely slip some baby pictures of myself to them in the hope they'd take the hint and stop. My daughter does resemble her daddy, but she also has my hair, eyes, skin and some facial features. Nothing has worked so far, and I am beyond frustrated.

Please print this because, childish as it may seem, being made to feel like a test tube who contributed nothing really hurts.

INVISIBLE IN ALABAMA

DEAR INVISIBLE: Stop hinting and tell your daughter's grandparents exactly what you have told me and the rest of my readers. But please say it gently, because what they are doing isn't unusual. When a child is born, it's natural for families to look for and recognize their own genetic traits. They may be tactless, but I'm sure they don't mean to be cruel. You are far more than a "test tube." You're a caring and conscientious mother for making sure that your child has a relationship with her grandparents.

DEAR ABBY: I just got a phone call from my father. He hadn't called in more than three months, so I was a little surprised to hear from him. The first words out of his mouth were, "Can I borrow \$250 to get my car fixed? You don't even have to get me a Father's Day present."

Abby, my dad is not poor. Now he is mad at me for saying no. He says I'm ungrateful, and that I owe it to him for all the years he paid child support to my mom.

I don't have the money to spare. I just spent a lot to have my own car fixed, and I'm saving for a new one. Was I wrong not to give him the loan? Should I have done it to keep the peace?

SECOND THOUGHTS IN OGDEN, UTAH

DEAR SECOND THOUGHTS: It depends on your relationship with your father. Obviously, you are not particularly close or there wouldn't have been a three-month gap between conversations. And since "the first words out of his mouth" were to ask for money, your dad's diplomatic skills could use some sharpening.

I don't think you were wrong to refuse. The worst reason in the world to make a loan is to "keep the peace."

P.S. Your father paid child support because he was required by law to do it. You do not owe him money in return.

DEAR ABBY: What is the proper way to communicate to your work colleagues the reinstatement of your maiden name after a divorce?

SINGLE AGAIN IN SAN RAMON, CALIF.

DEAR SINGLE AGAIN: Tell your co-workers about your name change and have new business cards printed. For those with whom you do business but do not see on a daily basis, a short note informing them of the name change would be suitable. If you are asked the reason for it, a two-word explanation, "I'm divorced," should suffice.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby

Love surrenders on assault charge

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Rocker Courtney Love surrendered to police Friday on an assault charge stemming from an April altercation at the home of her former boyfriend and manager.

A warrant was issued for Love's arrest earlier this month after she failed to appear for her arraignment on the assault charge. At the time, her attorney, Michael Rosenstein,

said she was hospitalized in New York City.

On Friday, Love was photographed, fingerprinted and then freed on a \$150,000 bail bond and ordered to appear for an arraignment on Aug. 20.

Smiling and dressed in blue jeans, Love slipped into the Police Department's Wilshire station with an entourage that included her attorney.

"She was extremely cooperative. She was pleasant. She was very coherent," said police Capt. Pat Findley.

The actress-singer—the widow of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain and the former lead singer of the band Hole—has two other cases pending against her in the Los Angeles area.

On Friday in Beverly Hills, a judge ordered Love to ap-

pear in court Thursday for a hearing on two felony counts of drug possession.

In a separate case, the singer-actress pleaded guilty May 25 to a misdemeanor count of being under the influence of a controlled substance in October. She is scheduled to appear in court in that case Tuesday and is expected to be ordered into a drug-treatment program.

Elvis fans want statue to mark 'Hayride'

SHREVEPORT, La. (AP)—Fans of Elvis Presley are trying to raise \$80,000 to have a statue of the rock 'n' roll icon created in time for the 50th anniversary of Presley's first appearance on "Louisiana Hayride."

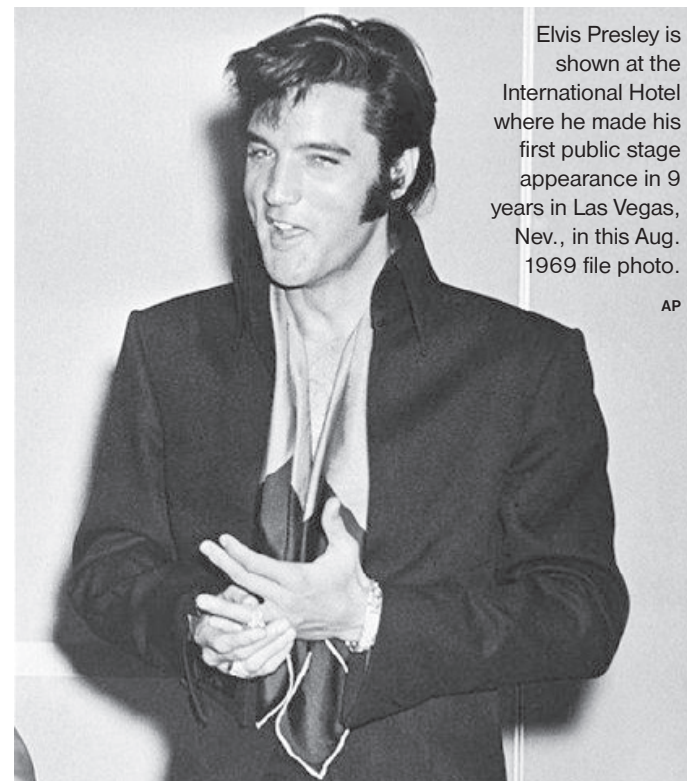
Friends of the Municipal Auditorium and a fan club known as Elvis Angels plan to ask the Downtown Development Authority next week for money, said Johnny Wessler, past president of the auditorium group.

Artist Eric Kaposta of Houston, who formerly lived in Shreveport, said he could have the statue ready in time for the Oct. 16 anniversary if backers can come up with \$20,000, Wessler said.

Wessler said Kaposta has created a bust of Presley that bears such an accurate resemblance to the singer that Memphis, Tenn.-based Elvis Presley Enterprises, which handles Presley's image, agreed to sanction the project.

"The statue will be on a tremendously large granite base that will tell a story and include lyrics from his songs," Wessler said.

Presley was among a cadre of stars—including Hank Williams, Johnny Cash and George Jones—who appeared early in their careers on the "Hayride," a stage show broadcast weekly from the Municipal Auditorium from 1948 to 1960.



Elvis Presley is shown at the International Hotel where he made his first public stage appearance in 9 years in Las Vegas, Nev., in this Aug. 1969 file photo.

AP

J.K. Rowling expecting her third child



AP

Author of the Harry Potter books J.K. Rowling and her husband, Neil Murray, at the UK premiere of 'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban' in London, in this May 30, 2004, file photo.

LONDON (AP)—"Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling said Saturday she is expecting her third child. Rowling, 38, made the announcement on her official Web site.

"I am really delighted to say that I am expecting a third baby, who is due next year," she said. "I always wanted three children, so I could not be happier."

Rowling's son, David, was born last year following her marriage to Neil Murray in 2001. She has a daughter, Jessica, from a previous marriage to Jorge Arantes.

The author reassured fans that the pregnancy would not affect the release of the next book in the Potter installment, which will be titled, "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince."

"Let me reassure you that book six remains well on track and, fingers crossed of course, I don't foresee any baby-related interruptions or delays," Rowling said.

"I still can't say for sure when it will be finished, but I have written a lot and I really like it."

'Fahrenheit 9/11' a hit with Disney chief

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—Disney chief executive Michael Eisner has seen "Fahrenheit 9/11," the film that The Walt Disney Co. refused to distribute—and he liked it.

"The reason it is a hit is it's entertaining," Eisner said last week. "I thought it was like going to a rock concert. I loved it, but not in a political (sense)."

Eisner spoke at Fortune magazine's fourth annual Brainstorm conference, co-hosted by The Aspen Institute.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" criticizes President Bush's response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the war



Eisner

in Iraq. The documentary has filled theaters since its release in June, drawing a record-breaking gross of \$94 million.

Eisner has said Disney decided not to distribute the film because its shareholders and customers do not expect it to be a partisan company.

Phish asks fans to be nice to Vermont

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP)—Phish has a message for fans planning to attend the band's big farewell festival in Coventry next month: Don't mess with Vermont.

The jam band posted a message on its Web site Thursday, noting that the Northeast Kingdom is "a region of unspoiled rural beauty and small, tight-knit communities."

Drummer Jon Fishman said it was important to the band that its last show, performed in its home state, go smoothly.

"Of all the gigs that we would ever do in our whole lives, and of all the places to end on a positive note, this is the one that's most meaningful to us," Fishman told The Burlington Free Press in an interview appearing in Saturday's editions.

Members of Phish have lived in the Burlington area for more than two decades. The band wants fans to carpool, and to leave the site as spotless as possible since much of the campground is on farmland usually left for grazing cattle or growing corn.

"This is your last chance to show the rest of the world what makes the Phish audience so unique," the band wrote.

Demand for tickets has exceeded expectations; all 70,000 tickets for the Aug. 14-15 event have been sold.

Pastimes



